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***La Música Nacional*: Changing Perceptions of the Ecuadorian National Identity in the Aftermath of the Rural Migration of the 1970s and the International Migration of the Late 1990s.**

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La Música Nacional: Changing Perceptions of the Ecuadorian National Identity in the Aftermath of the Rural Migration of the 1970s and the International Migration of the Late 1990s.

by

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Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2007

Dedication

To My Parents,

Alejandro and Blanca

Acknowledgements

I am truly grateful to Gerard Béhague, an outstanding teacher, mentor, and advisor, whose support and encouragement to ask deeper questions have been fundamental in the development of my academic career. His early departure in June 2005 is very much felt, though his influence and guidance are present in the conception and development of this work. I wish to express my sincere thanks to Robin D. Moore, my dissertation supervisor, who has given invaluable advice to this project, both in terms of content and structure. His insights, dedication, and help with translations and editing were greatly appreciated and had had a profound effect in the direction and completion of this work. I also want to express my thankfulness to Stephen Slawek, Veit Erlmann, and Michael Tusa for their academic guidance during my graduate years in the School of Music at UT Austin. Pauline Strong, Charlie Hale, Joel Sherzer, Aline Helg and Begoña Aretxaga (d.) helped me think in new ways about culture, identity politics, language, history, and nationalisms. Each of them has enlightened my understanding of social processes and society in Ecuador and elsewhere.

I would not have been able to complete my doctoral studies in the United States without the sponsorship of the Fulbright Commission in Ecuador, which

gave me a Fulbright scholarship to pursue a master's degree in 1995. I was able to conduct multi-side fieldwork research thanks to the College of Fine Arts Dean's Fellowship and the Graduate Studies Department Cullen Fellowship. I am very grateful to the Department of Music and Dance at the University of Kansas, where I am currently teaching, for giving me the time to concentrate on my dissertation.

This study was feasible thanks to the numerous composers, singers, and music entrepreneurs who devoted time from their busy schedules for interviews with me. Among these, especially, I want to thank Carlos Rubira Infante, Naldo Campos, Ricardo Realpe, Roberto Zumba, Cristóbal Vaca, Lola Zapata, Azucena Aymara and María de los Ángeles for their kindness and readiness to answer my questions. Also, Juanita Burbano, Teresita Andrade, and Hugo and Mauricio Zavala in New York. Among Ecuadorian scholars and music researchers, Hernán Ibarra, Pablo Guerrero, Inés del Pino, Marcos Espinoza, and Carlos Wong provided helpful comments and insights about Ecuadorian music and cultural life in Quito of yesteryear. Special thanks to the Cultural Department of the Banco Central del Ecuador for the opportunity to work with the Fondo Musical Vaca archives and collection of 78-rpm records of Ecuadorian music from the 1910 era, which enlightened my knowledge of Ecuadorian music in the early twentieth century. Very special thanks to all the Ecuadorian people with whom I talked in

the streets, busses and concerts. This was indeed the most interesting and fulfilling part of my research.

I was fortunate to find kind and generous people in my trips to New York, Madrid, and Lima, who provided assistance with lodging and contacts. In Madrid, I received the help of Gustavo and Morena Mateus, Sara González, and Gioconda Wong. I want to thank my family in New York, especially to Waygen and Luis Yip, Puig Yin and Eddie Ching, and Nancy and Guillermo Hagó, whose friendship and hospitality were greatly appreciated. In Lima, I want to express my gratitude to the Tejada family, especially Beto, Dalila, and Miriam, who provided me lodging without knowing me at all. In Quito, Lena and Reinaldo Cañizares, and María Antonieta and Gustavo Dávila provided convenient and affordable lodging throughout my research period in that city.

Very special thanks to Andre Moskowitz, Francesca Sutton, Jerry Fried, Michelle Wibbelsman, Michael O'Brien, and Sarah Combs, who helped me with the editing of this work and revised my English translations of Spanish texts at different stages. I am particular grateful with Michelle Wibbelsman, whose inquisitive mind and position as an Ecuadorian-American scholar greatly helped develop my insights. I want to thank Alejandro Madrid, Alfredo Colman, Sherri Canon, Estevan Azcona, Elizabeth LaBate, and Dan Sharp, who read and commented on early drafts of particular chapters.

My memories of Quito are filled with images of two dear German friends with "Ecuadorian hearts," who left this world a few years ago. In their nonagenarian years, Gi Neustaetter and Fritz Leffman constantly asked me about what I was writing about and what my plans for the future as an ethnomusicologist were. I want to express my gratitude to my dear friends Alegría Arce, Miriam Estrada, Cecilia Béhague, Theresa Fechek, Laura Cervantes, Julia Penn, María Alice Volpe, Fernando Troya, Deborah and Phil Kates, Stella Sánchez, Libushe Hlavenka, Natalia Alvarado, Lucía de Acosta, and Helen Mauchí for their amity and support throughout my years of graduate studies. Special thanks to Jerry Fried, whose friendship and support have accompanied me during the enduring years of writing this dissertation. Finally, I want to thank my dear family members, especially my mother Blanca, who have unconditionally supported me throughout my career while wondering what was taking me so long to finish this dissertation. Finally, I can tell them it is done.

Ketty A. Wong

***La Música Nacional*: Changing Perceptions of the Ecuadorian National Identity in the Aftermath of the Rural Migration of the 1970s and the International Migration of the late 1990s.**

Publication No._____

Ketty Alexandra Wong, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2007

Supervisor: Robin D. Moore

This study examines changing perceptions of Ecuadorian national identity in the aftermath of the social, economic, and political transformations in Ecuador in the period 1960-2004. By comparing upper-middle-class discourses about Ecuador's lack of international presence in the world, on the one hand, and lower-class musical practices expressing pride for Ecuadorian national culture, on the other, I seek to understand how Ecuadorians of different racial, ethnic, and social class backgrounds articulate their sense of nationhood. To these ends, I examine the notion of *música nacional*, a surrogate term for Ecuadorian music, as metaphor for Ecuadorian national identity. I argue that the way this phrase is used, showing the inclusion or exclusion of musical genres associated with the

indigenous and the urban-working-class populations, provides information about how different social groups envision the nation's ethnic configuration.

First, I analyze how the elites' ideology of *mestizaje* neglects the indigenous component of the *mestizo* nation, which is reflected in the nationalization of the *pasillo* in the 1930s. Then, I examine the emergence and development of *música rocolera* and *música chicha*, two styles of music associated with stigmatized working-class and indigenous populations, which emerged in the aftermath of the rural-to-urban migration in the 1970s. Finally, I examine the massive exodus of Ecuadorians to Spain and the United States as a result of the economic crisis in the late 1990s, which coincided with the *tecnocumbia* boom in Ecuador. I argue that changing perceptions of national identity at the turn of the twenty-first century are musically reflected in the decline of the *pasillo*, the elite symbol of the nation, and the boom of *música chicha*. I demonstrate that the naming of the latter as *música nacional* is symptomatic of the weakening of the socio-cultural hegemony of the upper-middle classes. The lower classes are de-homogenizing, racializing, and pluralizing perceptions of "Ecuadorianness" through the dissemination of their music at national and international levels. By doing so, they are stressing the indigenous component of the *mestizo* nation and providing a better picture of the actual configuration of the Ecuadorian nation.

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INTRODUCTION

This study examines ideas people have about themselves and their nations. Specifically, it examines Ecuadorians' changing perceptions of the national identity in times of profound social, economic, and political transformations. The period under research—1960–2004—is characterized by intense processes of urbanization and industrialization following the discovery of petroleum in 1972, massive migratory movements to urban centers and overseas, and the search for modernity led by military dictatorships in the 1970s. The notion of "Ecuadoriannes," previously pertaining only to people sharing a common language, history, and territory, is now opened to multiple readings, particularly because Ecuador has become a de-territorialized state with a diasporic population connected to the homeland through family ties and remittances. Nostalgic of their homeland, Ecuadorians in diaspora recreate their sense of nationhood in myriad ways, especially through listening and dancing to different types of Ecuadorian popular music (EPM).

My research focuses on Ecuadorians' ideas about *música nacional/Música Nacional* (national music). The phrase *música nacional* is not simply the Spanish translation of "national music," but a term widely used in Ecuador to refer to the country's "official" national music. Essentially, it represents an anthology of

national songs composed between the 1920s and the 1950s that was eventually transformed into the elites' national music. By contrast, I capitalize the same phrase to indicate to a broader corpus of song, and a broader concept encompassing Anderson's idea of an "imagined community" (Anderson 1991). *Música Nacional*, then, refers to a repertoire that has emerged in more recent decades among primarily working-class performers. It comprises new renditions of older *música nacional* with arrangements that include synthesizers, drum machines, and/or other instruments, as well as entirely new pieces. These repertoires represent different and contrasting views of the nation as shaped by ethnic, social class, generational, and educational backgrounds. Thus, the phrase *música nacional/Música Nacional* has become a polysemous term meaning different things for different people in different contexts.

Understanding what kinds of music people call *música nacional/Música Nacional* has become the focal point of my research. During my three-year stay in Ecuador, I came to realize that distinct social classes have varying definitions of *música nacional/Música Nacional.* For some it is the old repertoire of traditional *pasillo* from the 1920s–1950s, while for others it is the modern *sanjuanito* from the late 1990s. No previous study of Ecuadorian popular music has drawn attention to the double usage of this term; to call Ecuadorian music *música nacional/Música Nacional* has become a deeply ingrained and unnoticed habit.

Accepting the fact that music itself does not have any particular meaning but acquires associations with the people who produce and listen to it (Bourdieu 1984), I have learned to distinguish both usages by associating people's social background with their musical preferences and performance contexts.

Ecuadorians' attitudes toward their national music are symptomatic of their outlook of the nation and co-nationals. In general, the elites have a negative view of the national identity, which manifests itself in a sense of "cultural shame" for many kinds of Ecuadorian musical expressions and preference instead for international music. By contrast, lower-class Ecuadorians are proud of their nationality and assert their pride by listening and dancing to local repertoire despite the stigma it holds. This behavior, which I consider a spontaneous manifestation of "popular nationalism" or "nationalism from below" (Mallon 1995), reflects practical ways in which lower-class Ecuadorians express their national identities in everyday life.

National identities are generally studied from a top-down perspective, without taking into consideration the voices of the subaltern populations. One goal of this study is to understand how the urban lower classes articulate a "popular nationalism" by promoting alternate musical representations. By presenting a bottom-up analysis, my work seeks to recognize the agency of lower-class Ecuadorians in shaping styles of music that best reflect their collective

identity. From this perspective, EPM represents a "competing nationalist discourse," destabilizing elite images of "Ecuadorianness" and giving visibility to the marginal.

In this work, I examine three categories of Ecuadorian music, which emerged at different periods and have distinctive functions and performance contexts. These include: 1) older *música nacional,* 2) *música rocolera,* and 3) *música chicha.* In addition, I examine the boom of the Peruvian *tecnocumbia* in Ecuador in the late 1990s, a phenomenon that helps us understand why and how lower-class Ecuadorians' conceive "the national" beyond notions of geography and "authenticity."

A few other terms used in this study need clarification. I employ the phrase Ecuadorian popular music (EPM) to refer to an array of genres and styles associated with the lower-class population, including *música rocolera, música chicha,* and the *tecnocumbia.* I also use this term to distinguish working-class musics such as these from elite *música nacional.* Thus, the word "popular" in EPM refers to "people's music" largely disseminated in both rural and urban areas through alternative mass media (live concerts, AM radio and VHF television stations, cassette sales, and pirated CDs) that target lower-class audiences. This notion of "popular" combines aspects of the Latin American usage of the word with the British and North American usage of "popular" as a mass-mediated and

commodified music. Businessmen, musicians, and listeners seldom utilize this term. In my view, however, EPM more effectively describes the uses, functions, contexts, and the people who produce and consume working-class repertoire without the negative connotations of *música rocolera, música chicha,* and *tecnocumbia*. Furthermore, the term *música nacional* is already charged with so many different meanings that I see no advantages to retaining it as an analytical category.

In Latin America, the lower classes are not at all homogeneous, as Deborah Pacini rightly points out in her study of Dominican *bachata* (Pacini-Hernández 1995: 238). In my work, I use the term "lower classes" to refer to people with low income levels, whether they are employed, underemployed, or earn livings as informal vendors. This term includes all racial and ethnic groups in Ecuador, i.e. indigenous, *mestizo,* and Afro-Ecuadorian people who live either in villages or in the cities. It also includes people of various educational levels with low incomes, such as professionals and teachers who work in the public sector. Because of this inclusive usage, I often interchange the term "lower classes" with "working classes," "popular classes," "urban poor," and "subaltern populations." Since the early 2000s, the term "Ecuadorian migrants" has acquired a similar connotation because most people who emigrate come from the underclasses. By contrast, I use the term "upper-middle classes" to refer to people

in better-off positions, including not only the wealthy but also middle-class Ecuadorians who identify with the elites' aesthetics.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL APPROACH

Ironically, the most visible and audible popular music in Ecuador is the least investigated; with the exception of the *pasillo,* researchers have focused little attention on *música rocolera* and *música chicha.* Most investigations by native and foreign scholars focus on indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian music, rituals, and dances (Moreno 1972, 1996; Whitten 1974; Coba 1985; Schechter 1992, 1994; Wibbelsman 1997; Volinsky 1998; Franco 2002, 2000, 1999; Ritter 2003). Musicologists are more interested in finding the origin of national music genres and the development of the *pasillo* (Riedel 1986, Guerrero 1997, Wong 2004). The only writings about EPM are found in newspapers and magazines, penned by journalists and amateur music collectors. This work constitutes a valuable source of information for the reconstruction of EPM history.

Only since the late 1990s have social scientists analyzed EPM as a form of social expression reflecting the concerns and experiences of the urban lower classes (Núñez 1998, Quintana n/a, Ibarra 1998, Moscoso 1999, Santillán 2001, Granda 2004). This lack of attention is partly due to EPM's identification with "commercial" and "mass-mediated" music, which Ecuadorian music researchers often consider unworthy of study. The lack of formal music training of EPM

musicians and the association of the music itself with bohemian lifestyles also contributes to diminish its value in academic circles.

My study is greatly informed by the works of Robert Foster (2002) and Michael Billig (1995) both of who look at consumerism, banal activities, and everyday discourses as locus of "daily nationalism." Billig argues that "to have a national identity is to possess ways of talking about nationhood" shaped by "habits of thinking" (Billig 1995: 8). In my work, I regard "habits of thinking," and "habits of talking" about music as shaping and reproducing particular views of national identity. Therefore, this study examines ideas, opinions, discussions, debates, and many other forms of talking and writing about national music. To my knowledge, ways of thinking and talking about national music in daily life are rarely considered analytical variables in musicological and ethnomusicological studies of nationalism. Most works examine state-sponsored nationalism on the part of different government regimes (Austerlitz 1997, Béhague 1994, Schwartz-Kates 1997, Turino 2000, Buchanan 2006). Other studies explore the emergence of subaltern nationalist expressions using musicological commentary or the writing of journalists or critics (Moore 1998); however, none focuses on everyday discourses and practices as meaningful sites for the playing and performance of identities.

This study integrates "a discourse-centered approach" (Sherzer 1987, Urban 1991) to the study of popular music. By discourse I mean not only the way people talk about music (verbal discourse), but also the ways in which musical sounds mediate social reality (musical discourse). Discourse is considered here "the locus of the expression of ideology and especially of the playing out and the working out of conflicts, tensions, and changes inherent in ideological systems" (Sherzer 1990: 7). I view identities as "trapped in public discourse" (Urban 1991), and manifest in musical performances and in acts of listening, discussing, thinking, and writing about music (Stokes 1994). From this perspective, verbal discourses reproduce everyday "selves" and everyday "others" in the context of daily life, revealing not only the ideas people have about music itself, but also ideas about the lives and relationships of its listeners.

Particularly, I draw attention to discourses upper-middle-class Ecuadorians frequently repeat about and among themselves. One discourse claims that they are a sentimental people, a notion that has permeated all social classes to the point that most Ecuadorians consider being sentimental a unique feature distinguishing them from others. Another discourse asserts that Ecuadorians do not have a national identity because their music is barely known internationally. A third discourse, as mentioned, suggests that Ecuadorians have an inferiority complex that makes them underestimate their musical expressions. This is an

issue Ecuadorians do not normally talk about with non-nationals because it is part of an intimate sphere only discussed within the family or with close friends. I refer to Michael Herzfeld's notion of "cultural intimacy," pointing to the "privacy of nations" or "sore zones of cultural sensitivity" (Herzfeld 1997: x).

One might suggest that the inferiority-complex discourse is shaped and transmitted through "technologies of Otherness," a phrase I borrow from Sue Golding's (1997) book title to point to effective ways of naturalizing and internalizing differences and inequalities in unconscious ways. Stigmatizing and creating stereotypes of the "Other" are effective mechanisms of control that help the dominant classes maintain their positions of power. These are also ways of coping with anxieties emerging as a result of our inability to control the world (Gilman 1985). Likewise, I regard the labeling of music styles as another "technology of Otherness." The way an event is described or discussed—such as the notion that Columbus' arrival to America should be variously considered a "discovery," "encounter," "invasion," or "conquest"— influences our way of looking at it (Trouillot 1995). In a similar vein, the labels we use to refer to repertoires and styles of music influence the way we regard the people who listen to them. For example, *música rocolera* is associated with drunkenness and vulgarity, while *música nacional* is associated with cultured and sensitive people.

The labeling of elite *pasillos* as *música nacional* and working-class *pasillos* as *música rocolera* reveals an ideology of exclusiveness on the part of elites.

A CHANGE OF ITINERARY

My original dissertation project was based on the study of *música rocolera* as an urban working-class expression reflecting ethnic and social class conflict in Ecuador, the result of rural-to-urban migration. In the summer of 1999, I traveled to Quito to check on the feasibility of my project and satisfied myself that it could be done. However, when I returned to conduct field research in October 2001, the social and economic conditions in the country had changed so much that I had to re-examine, and eventually expand, the scope of my project. My original proposal did not take into account the drastic changes occurring in Ecuador as a rresult of the dollarization of the economy in 2000 and the massive exodus of the population abroad. The issues driving my research remained the same, i.e. the exploration of changing perceptions of national identity. The research process, however, demanded new theoretical approaches dealing with transnational migration and multiple-site research in the host countries where Ecuadorian migrants lived. In addition, I had to introduce new topics of discussion, including the sudden boom of *música chicha* and the Peruvian *tecnocumbia.* My research thus involved unexpected expenses required to finance the short trips I made to Spain (four weeks) and New York (two weeks) to interview Ecuadorian migrants

and see EPM performance abroad. For these reasons, the research took more time than I had initially expected.

Research abroad led to the consideration of issues I had not anticipated. Perhaps the most important was the emotional trauma many Ecuadorians experienced in diaspora, the result of separation from family and friends. I heard happy stories of Ecuadorian migrants who were able to legalize their residence status and reunite with their families after a period of time. I also heard sad stories of migrants who had a difficult time adapting to their new environment and experienced breakups in their marriages. For their part, children staying in Ecuador were having a hard time growing up without their parents' guidance.

Ecuadorians' complaints about their own government were ubiquitous, both at home and overseas. International migration was not only a response to social and economic crisis, but also to a government more concerned about paying external debt to international banks than to providing its citizens basic needs such as healthcare, education, and other social services. Furthermore, many migrants in Madrid spoke with me about the outrageous levels of corruption they had left behind in Ecuador, implicating everyone from blue-collar workers and policemen to congressional deputies and members of the Supreme Court. As migrants pointed out, the laws in Ecuador did not treat everyone equally. It did

not matter how hard they worked at home, they would never have a chance to prosper economically there.

I conducted fieldwork research in Quito from December 2001 to September 2004. As a participant observer, I attended numerous EPM concerts in different venues. My acquaintances were surprised that I took such a risk because the events were considered dangerous. People in the audience were also surprised to see a professional woman alone and frequently advised me to hide my camcorder and tape recorder to avoid being a victim of thieves. Fortunately, I never confronted a situation that risked my safety. I got involved in dancing and the sharing of drinks that normally takes place at these events, though I must confess that many times I simply faked the latter. The gesture of accepting a drink was the important thing. Not only I had to keep myself sober to observe and participate in the event but I was also dubious about hygiene issues.

During my field research, I talked to Ecuadorians of all social classes, selected at random on the street, in parks, on buses, in stores, and in concerts. I also interviewed renowned Ecuadorian singers, composers, entrepreneurs, and fans in Ecuador and New York. Besides the work in Madrid and New York, I also traveled to Lima to become acquainted with *chichódromos* and the development of the *tecnocumbia* in Peru. I wanted to observe the stylistic and contextual differences between *musica chicha* and the *tecnocumbia* in Peru and Ecuador.

This short two-week trip proved to be useful because I found significant disparities that helped me understand how Ecuadorian and Peruvian people perceive their music.

A major challenge has been finding reliable data with which to reconstruct the development of the different styles of music examined in this study. National record companies largely went into bankruptcy with music piracy and the onset of economic crisis; their music catalogs and sales records have been lost. Suffice to say that I was unable to find information about the dates of song releases or the names of many performers who first recorded the famous *música nacional* and *música rocolera* songs. However, I have reconstructed a rough periodization of major events with the help of numerous interviews published in newspapers and music magazines. I have also relied on oral histories provided by renowned musicians and singers of the 1970s. While this source of information provides useful personal insights, it also requires careful treatment because composers are passionate and often highly subjective in their opinions about music. I also visited the homes of music collectors who have devoted their entire lives to the search for recordings and scores of Ecuadorian music.

REFLEXIVE COMMMENTARY

Any cultural study of music always bears the mark of the ethnographer's biases. Despite the fact that I was a "native" scholar doing research in my home

country, I frequently felt as if I were an outsider to my research topic. A middle-class woman of Chinese descent, born and raised in the port city of Guayaquil, I was conducting research on a working-class music associated with the stigmatized lower-class population of Quito. My coastal accent often revealed I was a *"mona."* This term, which literally means "monkey," is what highlanders call people from the coast. Interestingly, many people I talked to in busses and on the streets thought I was foreign. They often asked me if I was from Korea, Japan, or China. I was surprised by their perceptions of my persona because in Guayaquil, where there is a large Chinese population, nobody would have asked me such a question. Their attitudes reminded me that I look Chinese on the outside, something I tend to forget under normal circumstances because I normally perceive myself as Ecuadorian. Having pursued graduate studies in Russia and the United States for quite a long time, I was identified as a "foreign" or "international" student, which constantly reminded me of my Ecuadorian natonality.

Knowing that I had formal training in musicology, many acquaintances from the National Symphony Orchestra were curious as to why I had shifted my research interests from the "great masters" of Western Europe to the music of Julio Jaramillo and Aladino, *rocolera* singers associated with the *cantina.* They thought I was doing research in the *cantinas* located in the 24 de Mayo street, a

red zone neighborhood in Quito. While I visited a couple to get acquainted with the environment, I was aware that the answers to my research questions were not in this place. My acquaintances often smiled with a certain irony when I told them I was attending *música rocolera* concerts in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo, a sports arena known for such events. Then, I realized that some upper-middle-class friends had never heard the word "*rocolera*" and thought I was studying Ecuadorian rock music.

My interest in *música rocolera* and *música nacional* stems from a long-standing curiosity and empathy with the urban poor. I want to know what *música rocolera* is and why it generates such controversy within Ecuador. At times, people talk about it as it were "taboo." My friends in Quito, for example, often warned me about the violence associated with working-class concerts and recommended that I sit in the highest rows of the *coliseo* to avoid being hit by glass bottles. Whether or not this activity was common in the past, I never encountered it in the many concerts I attended. It is obvious that there is a virulent stigma attached to this music, and to the people who listen to it. I am interested in why this stigma is created and for what purposes.

Just like the people I examine in this study, I grew up listening to passionate discourses and debates related to the *pasillo*, Ecuador's traditional musical emblem. I now realize that when Ecuadorians talk about the *pasillo* they

are referring to different styles of *pasillos* according to their generational and social class perspective, and have very different views even of the same music. While some people consider older *pasillos* to be a pleasant sort of romantic song, for instance, others regard the same music as sad and depressing. I have attempted to discover why the *pasillo* raises such varied reactions among advocates and detractors, and what social issues are reflected in those debates.

ORGANIZATION

This work is organized chronologically according to the emergence of different styles of Ecuadorian music. Chapter One provides a background on Ecuador's history and explains the origin of various discourses pertaining to the population's inferiority complex and low self-esteem. It also introduces Manuel Espinosa's idiosyncratic view of *mestizaje,* which provides insights into the question of Ecuadorian identity. Chapter Two introduces an array of *música nacional* genres discussed throughout this work and familiarizes the reader with the pantheon of authors, composers, and interpreters who have shaped the sounds and images of elite *música nacional.* Chapter Three focuses on the role of the Liberal Revolution and the media in the nationalization of the *pasillo* in the 1920s–1930s as well as its decline in the 1970s.

Chapters Four and Five examine *música rocolera* and *música chicha,* respectively, as expressions of the urban poor in the 1970s. The first is associated

with the emergence of new working-class music in the urban areas, while the latter point to modernization of indigenous music. Chapter Six explores the *tecnocumbia* boom in Ecuador in the late 1990s and the creation of an alternative music industry that became the outlet for EPM on national and international levels. Chapter Seven analyzes the ideological discourses of upper-middle-class Ecuadorians in relation to a lack of national identity as well as the musical practices of lower-class Ecuadorians reinforcing their nationality. It also examines several discourses about Ecuadorians' inferiority complexes. In the conclusion I refer to debates of the 1980s and 1990s regarding the standing of the *pasillo* as the musical symbol of Ecuador, which have lost overtone with the rise of EPM at the turn of the twenty-first century.

All translations of interviews and song lyrics are mine. Bilingual friends have edited them for English accurateness. The pictures are either photographs by the author, or taken from CD jackets. An accompanying CD with twenty-one musical examples illustrating the different genres and styles of music discussed in this work is available upon request.

CHAPTER 1

LA NACIÓN EN CIERNES (THE NATION IN BLOOM)[1]: A SEARCH FOR "ECUADORIANNESS"

Preguntan de donde soy
Y no sé qué responder
De tanto no tener nada,
No tengo de donde ser.
Jorge Enrique Adoum

They ask where I come from
And I don't know how to respond
Having had nothing for so long
I have no place to be from

The beginning of my field research in Ecuador in October 2001 coincided with two important events that reminded Ecuadorians of their nationhood. These were the presidential elections on October 17 and the Fifth Population and Housing Census released on November 7. The election of a nation's leader and inquiry into a country's population are certainly two important "frames of reference" (Foster 2002) within which citizens of any country can measure their level of national belonging. My fieldwork also coincided with several international events in which Ecuador figured prominently. In 2002, Ecuador's national soccer team qualified for the first time for the World Cup, and in 2003, Ecuador hosted the Miss Universe beauty pageant. That same year, Jefferson

[1] The title of this chapter is taken from the three-volume study *Ecuador: una Nación en Ciernes* by Rafael Quintero and Erika Silva.

Pérez won a gold medal at the Athletic World Championship in Paris and set a world record in the march (*marcha*) competition. He had already won a gold medal in the 1996 Olympic Games and was considered a strong candidate to repeat this feat in the 2004 Olympics in Athens.[2] Also in 2004, Sebastián Cordero's movie *Crónicas* screened alongside other celebrated Latin American productions at the Cannes Film Festival. Ecuadorian people were injected with a strong dose of optimism and pride through the international recognition of these athletes and artists.

These images of cosmopolitanism starkly contrasted the sad farewell scenes reenacted everyday at the Guayaquil and Quito international airports where people of diverse social classes were leaving their country and their families in hopes of finding a better future abroad. Some were *campesinos* who had never left their hometown and who spoke no other language besides Spanish and/or Quichua. Others were middle-class Ecuadorians who had lost their jobs and life savings in the banking crisis of 1999. People who were denied legal access took the path of illegal immigration to the United States, paying large amounts of money to *coyotes* to smuggle them across the United States border. All migrants saw Ecuador as a nation unable to provide for their basic needs.

This chapter focuses on how Ecuadorians of different social classes perceive, feel, and imagine their nation. As a mental construct, the nation is an

[2] Jefferson Pérez won the bronze medal in the 20 kms. march.

"empty form" that needs to be filled with images, affects, rhetoric, and practices (Aretxaga, 2001), both reflecting and shaping the way individuals view themselves as a national community. In a pluriethnic and highly stratified society such as Ecuador, one would expect the emergence of multiple musical expressions competing for national representation. Instead, upper-middle-class representations of "Ecuadorianness" have dominated most of the twentieth century, while those of the lower classes have been silenced or neglected in the "official" imaginary of the nation. This is especially true for cultural forms such as music, where the dominant classes have determined which genres and which songs best represent the national identity.

In this chapter, I introduce the theoretical background sustaining my study of musical nationalism and national identity in Ecuador. I contend, along with Stutzman (1981) and Whitten (1981), that although a hegemonic national identity was ostensibly formed around the ideology of *mestizaje* (the blending of indigenous and Spanish cultures), it has actually been shaped primarily by Spanish heritage. I introduce Manuel Espinosa's idiosyncratic view of *mestizaje,* and a reading of Ecuador's "official history" as taught in the school system to explain why and how Ecuadorians internalize a negative view of the indigenous roots of their nationality. In addition, I examine the way Ecuadorians have imagined their national territory in the aftermath of the Peruvian invasion of 1941,

and through the international migration of the late 1990s. As an "empty form," I argue that the Ecuadorian nation is filled with contradictory images of "Indianness" and "mestizo-ness," which have influenced the way Ecuadorians view themselves and their nationhood.

NATION, NATIONALISM, AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Benedict Anderson (1991) has suggested that "communities are to be distinguished ... by the style in which they are imagined," stressing the role that the state, schools, and the media play in the construction of nationhood. His work focuses on print capitalism and literacy as means of crystallizing European national identities in the nineteenth century. In Latin America, however, where illiteracy is an endemic problem, more often the culture industry and mass media have cemented collective images of nationhood (Rowe 1991: 196). In Mexico, for example, the film industry consolidated images of the new social order in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution (King 1990 in Radcliffe 1999: 29). In Brazil, television and soccer became the most important means for constructing a sense of Brazilian nationhood (Rowe 1991: 8). Music has also shaped and disseminated "sonic images" of the nation. The Ecuadorian *pasillo,* the Colombian *bambuco,* the Brazilian *samba,* the Argentine *tango,* and the Mexican *ranchera* are just a few examples of national musics that identify and distinguish Latin American nations.

The nation is generally imagined as a homogeneous community made up of people who share a common history, territory, or language. It is constantly recreated in public and private spheres. Special occasions, such as holidays and major sports competitions, define contexts for "feeling the nation" (Foster 2002), as do everyday "banal" activities (Billig 1995), such as listening to music or eating regional food. Borrowing Foster's definition of a nation as "a collection of people united by the commodities they jointly possess and consume in common" (Foster 2002: 78), I suggest that a nation can also be conceived as a collection of people united (or fragmented) by the music they jointly listen to and produce. Unlike Foster's focus on commodities, I see a country's population connected through the consumption of, and discourses about local styles of music, which create a frame of reference upon which Ecuadorians of different social and ethnic backgrounds position themselves.

Feelings and emotions are powerful cultural markers identifying a national character. According to Raymond Williams (1977), the nation is made up of bonds of affect and shared sentiments that mold particular "structures of feeling." Particular human characteristics are often associated with the types of music they make. For example, the lively character of Afro-Caribbean dance music supports the general perception that Caribbean people are cheerful and easy-going. Ecuadorians, however, take pride in being "sentimental," that is, in valuing an

overly sensitive and emotional display of their inner feelings and "vulnerable self." Many times I witnessed the audience's receptiveness to an emotional performance and heard people praising a singer's ability to move them to tears. Thus, the idea of "being sentimental" shapes a collective sense of belonging in Ecuador. "Belonging," however, does not necessarily entail "togetherness" (Aretxaga, 2000). Different social groups have different sonic images and conceptions of the nation, and yet share a common sense of national feeling and belonging.

Nations can be imagined in multiple ways depending on who does the imagining (Mallon 1995). In general, hegemonic national identities represent the imagination of the dominant classes. In times of political and economic instability, however, there is "maneuvering room" (Chambers 1991) for non-dominant groups to alter these images, sounds, and rhetorical practices. One concrete musical example is the case of the *bambuco,* the Andean musical genre considered the most representative national music in Colombia during the first half of the twentieth century. In the 1960s, it was overshadowed by the *cumbia,* an Afro-Colombian rural dance whose urban/commercial rendition represented "Colombianess" within and beyond the country (Wade 2000). A similar case is occurring with the *pasillo*, whose position as Ecuador's emblematic music has been contested since the late 1970s. In Ecuador, however, no other folk music

genre has had as broad a national and international acceptance as the Colombian *cumbia,* which was accepted across social classes due, among other factors, to its international appeal.

Nationalisms point to a particular style of imagining the nation (Aretxaga, 2000). As Mac Clintok argues, "nationalisms are invented, performed, and consumed in ways that do not follow a universal blueprint" (Mac Clintok n.d.). They do not emerge in a vacuum, but are socially and historically constructed taking into account social, cultural, economic, and historical contexts. In Argentina, for example, the idealized image of the *gaucho,* the "cowboy" of the Pampas, identifies a nation made up of nationals and European immigrants (Schwartz-Kates 1997); in Cuba, "blackness" is nationalized through images of Afro-Cuban culture (Moore 1998); and "Mexicanness" is identified with an "Indianness" glorifying indigenous people as a "cosmic race" (Béhague 1979). As in Mexico, nationalism in Ecuador adopted images of "Indianness," but instead of creating the idea of a "cosmic race," the motto of Ecuadorian nationalism became a social protest denouncing the oppression of indigenous and other subaltern populations. *Indigenismo* and Social Realism, the dominant artistic movements of the 1930s, are best expressed in Jorge Icaza's novel *Huasipungo* and in Guayasamín's collection of paintings *Los Tiempos de la Ira* (The Time of Anger),

both of which chronicle and depict the exploitation of the indigenous population by the land-owning classes.

Although nationalisms tend to be analyzed from an official top-down perspective, they can also be generated from below (Mallon 1995) as an alternative, oppositional, and/or counter-hegemonic expression that does not necessarily imply an empowerment of the subaltern populations. The view of a nation made up of a homogeneous population is an abstract and inaccurate construct, one that does not consider heterogeneity in terms of ethnic, social class, religion, education, gender, and age differences. I see both "official" and "popular" nationalisms as two sides of the same coin. They are not mutually exclusive because national identities are necessarily constructed on the basis of unequal power relations (Wade 2000).

In his study of modernity and identity in Latin America, Jorge Larrain (1996: 208) states that national identities exist in two distinct spheres: in public discourse, which is articulated largely by the dominant classes, and in private discourse, which expresses a variety of individual subjectivities. He points out that studies of national identity tend to privilege public versions rather than private ones, and that ordinary people, the true culture makers, are neglected. Public discourses hide the nation's ethnic and racial diversity behind a constructed homogeneity articulated by the elites and the mass media. These

discourses disregard the political, economic, and cultural changes that societies normally undergo. Despite the "constructedness" of national identities, however, the dominant classes do not have a monopoly on the production of meanings and identities at the subjective level (Foster 2002: 6). This study illustrates how lower-class Ecuadorians become agents in the re-articulation of their identities.

Why do questions of national identity still matter in a globalized world? Unlike the general assumption that globalization tends to homogenize and erase national cultures, Wilks points out that globalization "actually promotes difference, but difference expressed in a standardized vocabulary" (Wilks 1995 in Foster 2002: 14). He regards beauty pageants, sports competitions, and music festivals as examples of uniform difference, in which nations express their uniqueness in terms of content rather than form. These activities can be regarded as "local appropriation" or "domestication of the foreign" (idem).

From another perspective, Robertson argues that globalization always entails a simultaneous manifestation of the global and the local, i.e., the idea of global culture is "constituted by the increasing interconnectedness of many local cultures," a process he calls "glocalization" (Robertson 1995: 31). He contends that the global cannot exclude the local because the global requires the creation of locality to exist. For him, "globalization" involves the reconstruction, in a sense the production, of 'home,' 'community,' and 'locality' (Robertson 1995: 30), but

at the same time, "the nation-state itself has been a major agency for the production of diversity and hybridization" (1995: 40-41). Thus, national identities do matter because they are expressions of "particularisms" reflecting global trends. For example, changes in the arrangements of *pasillos* and *sanjuanitos* in the 1970s and 1990s illustrate how electronic instruments and international musical genres, such as the Colombian *cumbia* and the working-class *bolero,* are introduced and localized as expressions representing the lower classes (See Chapter 4 and 5).

THE ECUADORIAN IDENTITY: LITERATURE REVIEW

Why do questions of identity matter in a country such as Ecuador? These questions are important in a pluriethnic society with a tri-ethnic heritage (Amerindian, Hispanic, and African) that has constantly denied its indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian roots. Questions of identity matter in a country with two economic centers of power—the *Costa* (coast) and the *Sierra* (highlands)—in which regional identities are stronger than national identities. Finally, questions of identity matter in a country fragmented by profound social class differences, articulated and reproduced in daily cultural discourses and practices.

The centrality of the national identity question is reflected in the extensive body of scholarship by Ecuadorian social scientists and Ecuadorianists (Quintero and Silva 1991; Silva 1992, 2004; Traverso 1998; Radcliffe 1999; Pachano 2003;

Almeida 2003; Ibarra 2003). In these studies, Ecuador is conceived as an "invertebrate" country, as "two nations sharing the same territory" (Silva 2004: 41), and a country without a national project to integrate its people and regions (Traverso 1998). All these statements refer to the regional conflicts between the *Costa* and the *Sierra,* and more specifically, between Guayaquil, Ecuador's main port city and economic center, and Quito, the country's capital city and political center.

In general, most Ecuadorians believe that regionalism stems from geographical and climatic differences that have shaped the characteristics of the people from each region. Accordingly, people from the *Costa* are known to be more extroverted and happy than people from the *Sierra*, who are seen as introverted and reserved. Regional differences are also expressed in political ideology and religious practices. People from the *Costa* promote laicism and are more liberal than the conservative and religious people from the *Sierra.* The economic activity and people's ethnicity also set these regions apart. The *Costa* is oriented toward an export economic model (cacao and banano), while the highland is an agricultural economy based on a land-owning system. While indigenous people from the *Costa* were acculturated at an early stage of colonization, the *Sierra* has a predominant indigenous population. In these views,

Ecuadorians overlook the fact that the roots of regionalism are found in the search for political and economic power by the dominant classes of both regions.

Ecuadorians often engage in discussions about their national identity, especially when they talk about a way of being Ecuadorian. Paradoxically, many politicians and upper-middle-class Ecuadorians believe that Ecuadorians do not have a national identity, or if they had one, it has been lost (Traverso 1998). These were the responses social psychologist Martha Traverso received when she conducted a survey asking politicians whether or not Ecuadorians had a national identity. It is important to clarify that many Ecuadorians understand the term "national identity" as the international image of Ecuador, rather than "who they think they are." Therefore, the belief that Ecuador lacks a national identity stems from a collective perception that Ecuador, its people, and its cultural expressions are little known at the international level.

From a literary perspective, most writers point to a negative identity and devalued image of Ecuador. Miguel Donoso Pareja (2000), for example, writes about a "schizophrenic character" of Ecuadorian identity, in allusion to the strong regionalism that exists between people from the *Costa* and the *Sierra.* Jorge Enrique Adoum (2000: 46) describes "particular traits" of Ecuadorianness in his book *Ecuador: Señas Particulares* in these terms:

> The Ecuadorian citizen, in general … adopts from the outset a defeatist attitude, almost servile, of "Indian" or "*longo*,"[3] when abroad or when confronted by someone whom he or she perceives to be superior based on his/her nationality, position, income …[4]

As I will show in the next sections, Ecuadorian identity is defined by ideas people have about their ethnicity, their history, and their territory. The dominant classes have constructed and manipulated these ideas to legitimize their position of power based on the ideology of *mestizaje*, or *mestizo* nation, which I discuss in the following section.

MESTIZAJE IN ECUADOR

The term *mestizaje* is a complex concept that carries strong colonial and racial connotations. It has undergone various conceptual transformations. During the colonial period, the term *mestizaje* pointed to racial intermingling between indigenous and Hispanic people. In the early twentieth century, this term was used as part of an ideology of scientific racism to demonstrate the "backwardness" of the "Indian." In more recent discourses, authors have used this term to refer to a cultural process whereby indigenous people are acculturated to Western ways upon migrating to the city.

[3] For Quichua-speaking people, *longo* is a synonym of young indigenous person. This term has negative connotations in the context of ethnic and racial discourses.

[4] "El ecuatoriano, en general… adopta de entrada una actitud de derrota, casi servil, de 'indio' o 'longo' en el extranjero o frente a quien le parece superior por su nacionalidad, su cargo, su dinero …"

Two opposing views have dominated studies of *mestizaje* in Latin America in the past century. The first emerges in the early twentieth century as "an official discourse of national formation" among the dominant classes praising the creation of a new *mestizo* culture as the basis of the "*mestizo* nation." José Vasconcelos, the Mexican minister of education (1920–24), implemented this ideology in Mexico. The second view, proposed by progressive scholars such as Marisol de la Cadena, regards *mestizaje* as "a liberating force that breaks open colonial and neocolonial categories of ethnicity and race" (Mallon 1996: 171).

In Ecuador, the dominant classes constructed images of an Ecuadorian national identity around the ideology of *mestizaje*, which required ethnic groups to abandon their ethnic identity as a prerequisite to membership in the nation-state (Stutzman 1981). This position was clearly stated in 1972, when General Rodríguez Lara claimed: "There is no more Indian problem" because "we all become white when we accept the goals of national culture" (Stutzman 1981: 45). The "Indian problem" to which Rodríguez Lara referred was illiteracy and the lack of integration of indigenous people into the modern nation-state and market economy. Cultural differences—religious beliefs, language, and customs–were seen as obstacles to Ecuador's modernization. Norman Whitten, however, warned that implicit in this ideology was the concept of *blanqueamiento* (whitening), which excludes those ethnic groups considered "unmixed," i.e. indigenous and

Afro-Ecuadorian people (Whitten 1981, 1998). He also pointed to the power dynamics embedded in this ideology by asserting that in the process of miscegenation, "it is not the white who indigenizes, but the Indian who whitens" (Whitten 1981). Therefore, the ideology of *mestizaje* did not mean "integration" but rather exclusiveness of the "dark skin of society."

The view of *mestizaje* as *blanqueamiento* has been countered by the notion of a "constructive miscegenation," which praises the benefits of racial mixing. Vasconcelos used this view in his conception of a "cosmic race" in Mexico. During the past decade, social scientists revisiting ethnic histories have redefined concepts of *mestizaje* in similar ways by viewing it as an alternative and empowering force, one that does not imply a rejection of indigenous culture (De la Cadena 2000: 12). As a corollary to such new understandings of *mestizaje,* Marisol de la Cadena proposes the use of the term "de-Indianization" to point to current views of indigenous culture as a postcolonial phenomenon, and "Indianness" as a colonized and inferior social condition. She argues that the new term "allows grassroots intellectuals to reinvent indigenous culture stripped of the stigmatized Indianness assigned to this ethnic group since colonial times" (De la Cadena 2000: 7).

Following this line of thought, in his study of music making in the Mantaro Valley, ethnomusicologist Raúl Romero views *mestizaje* as "a gradual

appropriation of modernity by the Andean Indian peasant" and "a process by which Indian sectors living in closed communities interact fully with regional and national markets…" (Romero 2002: 89). In his ethnographies, Romero describes proud *mestizos* who move easily from tradition to modernity, and vice versa, rather than tormented and displaced *mestizos.* However, this change in the analysis of *mestizaje* seems to respond more to scholars' desire to give agency to *mestizos* rather than to an actual change in their social status.

In spite of these epistemological changes, current notions of *mestizaje* in the Andean region continue to be constructed in opposition to images of "Indianness." Zoila Mendoza-Walker argues that *mestizaje* is frequently associated with social mobility, an advantageous position in labor relations, and identification with national/urban culture (Mendoza 2000: 15). Florencia Mallon criticizes "traditional" and "conventional" approaches that take ethnic and racial categories at face value, arguing that notions of ethnicity need to be historically and politically contextualized (Mallon 1996: 174). On the other hand, Manuel Espinosa contends that a distorted concept of *mestizaje* has been dominant in Ecuadorian social sciences due to the influence of foreign scholars who formulate rigid divisions between *mestizos* and indigenous people, which replicate segregationist experiences these scholars have in their own societies (Espinosa 2000).

Espinosa contends that *mestizo* is a term mostly used by scholars rather than a self-ascribed term used by racially or ethnically mixed peoples (idem). He shows that both the indigenous and non-indigenous populations use different terms to refer to *mestizo*s, most of which have pejorative connotations when analyzed as ethnic and racial categories. These terms include words like *longo, cholo* (urbanized and acculturated indigenous person), and *mishu* (Quichua word for *mestizo*)**.** Similar types of racially pejorative terms are ascribed to music, such as *música chicha* and *música rocolera.* These music labels, used by the upper-middle classes to refer to indigenous and working-class musical practices, are not terms created by the people who listen to this music.

Mestizo is one of those relational concepts that can only be defined conjuncturally. Kingman, for example, argues that most Quiteños used to talk about "them" when referring to "Indians," but employ an inclusive "we" that incorporates indigenous people when conceiving of Spaniards as the "Other" (Kingman et al 2003: 289). On the other hand, linguist Louisa Stark found that ordinary people in the area of Cotacachi, in the northern highland region, use local terms to define themselves, while the term *mestizo* is used with a reference to social and economic status (Stark in Espinosa 2000: 205). She provides an example of four individuals: 1) a member of an indigenous community, 2) a *tractorista* (or tractor operator), 3) a *hacienda* administrator, and 4) a *hacienda*

owner. Stark argues that from the perspective of the indigenous community member, the *tractorista* is a *cholo,* the administrator is a *mishu,* and the owner is the *amo* (owner), while he defines himself as a *runa* (Indian). For the *tractorista,* the indigenous person is a *longo,* while he, the administrator, and the owner are *blancos* (white people). For the administrator, the indigenous person is a *natural,* the *tractorista* is a *cholo,* and he and the owner are *blancos.* For the *hacienda* owner, however, the indigenous member is an *indígena,* the *tractorista* is a *cholo,* and the administrator is a *mestizo,* while he regards himself as *blanco*. It is worth noting that the *hacienda* owner uses the same terms that social scientists employ in their analysis of ethnic groups.

In 2001, the term *mestizo* was first used in Ecuador as an ethnic category in a population census. Ecuadorians were asked to select their ethnicity among four categories: indigenous, white, *mestizo,* and Afro-Ecuadorian. Most people understood the term *mestizo* as a general category pointing to any ethnic and racial miscegenation, not necessarily associated with the mixing of Hispanic and indigenous people. For instance, many descendents of European and Asian immigrants who arrived in Ecuador in the early twentieth century identified themselves as *mestizos,* such as Jaime Nebot Saadi, the mayor of Guayaquil, who was born in Ecuador to Lebanese parents. Like the mayor, members of my own family identified as *mestizos* because they were ethnic Chinese born in Ecuador.

Newspapers reported that many upper-middle-class Ecuadorians, especially from the *Costa,* were confused and did not know how to answer the census because *mestizo* was not a term they normally used to identify themselves. In many cases, it was the student collecting the census information who would answer the "ethnicity" question for them. These reactions support Espinosa's view, one that I share in, that in Ecuador *mestizo* is a scholarly term, rather than an "emic" self-identifying category.

Espinosa's provocative view of *mestizaje* is relevant to my analysis and needs to be explained in detail. He rejects the notion of *mestizaje* as a racial mixture, cultural syncretism, or acculturation, and uses the term "Indians" rather than "indigenous" to refer to the Amerindian population. Unlike most scholars, Espinosa does not draw a line between concepts of "white" and *"mestizo,"* or between *"mestizo"* and "indigenous." For him, self-identified *mestizos* are Indians [sic] with a stronger level of "Hispanization" than self-identified Indians. In other words, *mestizos* are simply "ex-Indians" who adopt Spanish cultural practices in order to hide an indigenous cultural consciousness (Espinosa n/a: 27). According to Espinosa, Ecuadorian *mestizos* have sought cultural distinctiveness from Indians since colonial times in order to gain civil rights afforded to *mestizos* but denied to Indians. For example, *mestizo*s who spoke Spanish and adopted

Hispanic ways of dressing were able to get jobs denied to Indians, or evade tax payments that were mandatory for Indians only.

As a result, *mestizos* have maintained a double standard of living: in the private sphere they are free to express their indigenous cultural essence, but in public they behave as non-Indians. Therefore, Ecuadorians' inferiority complex is the consequence of this life of continual *simulacrum* which gives rise to a negative view of themselves and their culture. In Espinosa's view, there is no process of acculturation as such because *mestizos* have not lost their original cultural forms. He suggests that indigenous people adopted "acculturation… as a strategy for survival rather than social ascendance." Accordingly, the adoption of Hispanic cultural forms does not imply the end of indigenous culture, but merely an adaptation to current social realities (Espinosa n/a: 24-26).

This reading of "acculturation" as a strategy for survival is also found in discourses of indigenous intellectuals. Luis Macas, a prominent indigenous leader and presidential candidate in the 2006 elections, stated in an interview with Jim and Linda Belote that indigenous people have "employed a variety of strategies to survive colonialism… People knew how to preserve their own culture, their own ways of doing things, their own institutions" (Macas, Belote, Belote 2004: 220). He recalled his father's wise words: "When the *laichus* [a Saraguro term for non-indigenous people] want to win, you have to just be quiet. It does not matter

whether or not you are right; if you are going to lose, just be quiet. Why keep talking? I will not win in a fight with them, I will let them hit me if they want to." For Macas' father, compliance was a form of resistance and a means of community survival because "if we did not comply with them, they would have killed us, and we would not have survived" (idem).

According to Espinosa, Ecuadorian *mestizos* experience "ethnic shame" that makes them simulate being the "Other" in everyday life. This is done by "wearing masks" to feign different social status or cultural orientation. Two examples of masking their "Indianness" are cutting their long braids or to avoid speaking Quichua in the urban context. According to Espinosa, this *simulacrum* takes place at different levels: *mestizos* pretend to be white, rural *mestizos* feign urban *mestizos*, middle-class *mestizos* act as if they are upper-class people, and upper-class *mestizos* imitate Europeans. The social masks they wear, however, cannot hide their indigenous consciousness because these masks show a public identity that is at variance with the private one. As a result, an indigenous peasant may alter his external look by changing his clothes or cutting his braid, but it is unlikely that he will change his cultural expressions or the music with which he has identified since childhood.

Indigenous organizations in Ecuador reject the term *mestizaje* and call themselves "*Indígenas*" as part of their identity politics. The Reformed

Constitution of 1998 declared Ecuador a multinational and pluriethnic country. Accordingly, *mestizaje* is not considered a national project any more. Despite the amended constitution, there is still lingering racism manifest in discourses and opinions about cultural forms such as *música chicha.*

READINGS OF ECUADORIAN HISTORY

It is well known that "official histories" are normally written by the dominant classes to legitimate their position of power. Ecuador's history is taught in school textbooks sanctioned by the Ministry of Education (Stutzman 1980: 60). In this section, I present a brief account of Ecuador's hegemonic historical discourse in order to trace the origin of Ecuadorians' negative view of their national identity. The history is narrated in chronological order and focuses on three main issues: 1) perceptions of indigenous people, 2) regionalism, and 3) territory.

PERCEPTIONS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Tellingly, all history before the Spanish conquest is described as "pre-history," while the starting point of Ecuador's "actual history" is said to begin with the arrival of the conquistadors in the early 1530s (Silva 2004). The "pre-history" is based on the legend of the *Historia del Antiguo Reino de Quito* (History of the Ancient Kingdom of Quito), written in 1789 by Padre Juan de

Velasco, a *creole* Jesuit priest born in South America. Velasco points to the existence of a kingdom founded by the Cara people, who arrived on the coastal shores of Ecuador and settled in the northern highlands.[5] Through wars and alliances with the Quitus, Cañaris, and Puruhaes, the Caras built a confederation of indigenous nations analogous to that of the Incan empire. The Shyri, a name later used to refer to the kingdom's entire population, led the Reino de Quito.

The official pre-history continues with the invasion of the Reino de Quito by the Incas in the 1470s. The Shyris' post-war insurrection ended only with the marriage of the Inca Huayna Capac to the last Shyri ruler's daughter, Paccha, who gave birth to Atahualpa. Before his death, Huayna Capac divided the Tahuantinsuyo into two halves, leaving the northern part to Atahualpa, and the southern territories to Huáscar, his first son from a Cuzco princess. Huáscar started a civil war against his half-brother Atahualpa, but was defeated and killed in the attempt. The political instability and state of war in the Incan Empire enabled the Spanish conquest. Atahualpa was captured and killed by the Spaniards in 1533, and after his death, Indian warriors hid Atahualpa's treasures and fought bravely against the Spaniards to the death. So the story goes…

According to Erika Silva, these narratives show that before the Spanish conquest, Ecuadorian history is in essence a history of an Indian aristocracy that expanded the Reino de Quito through wars and royal marriages. Silva points to a

4 Juan de Velasco does not provide approximate dates of the Caras arrival.

divorce or lack of historical continuity between the past and the present, i.e. in the "praise of an archaeological Indian" and "the devaluation of the real/present Indian" (Silva 2004: 22). Velasco's legend also provides first accounts of "Peruvian expansionism," an aspect that has frequently been invoked to explain a long-standing border dispute with Peru. Although Velasco's history lacks of scientific evidence, the upper-middle classes adopted this "history" in the early twentieth century as the master narrative of Ecuador's nationality in order to explain an indigenous origin distinct from that of the Incas in Peru (Silva 2004: 21).

Ecuador's modern history starts with the Spanish conquest and the *mestizaje* of people and cultures. The hegemonic narrative highlights the lives of conquerors, presidents, bishops, and elite *creole* Spaniards, while neglecting and de-valuing those of indigenous people who made up the majority of the population. Narratives about the latter are reduced to chronicles of their evangelization and their labor (meaning exploitation) within the *hacienda* (large agricultural estate) system. Adjectives like "rude," "savage," "lazy," and "natural slave" are used abundantly in colonial documents to justify the social status of indigenous people as servants.

According to Silva, two myths have given continuity to these negative images of the indigenous population (Silva 1992). The first myth, the *mito de la*

raza vencida (myth of the vanquished race), portrays Ecuadorians as "losers" and "defeated" in a triple conquest: the conquest of the Andean "wild geography" by the Spaniards turned indigenous people into an introverted and melancholy people; the conquest of the indigenous population by the Incas in the late fifteenth century devastated the national conscience; and the Spanish conquest in the early 1530s brought about "civilization" and the emergence of *mestizaje* (idem). Discourses of the "submissive" and "servile" Ecuadorian character derive from colonial perceptions of "Indianness" and are found in numerous writings of historians and writers from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Only recently have the indigenous social movements contested this taken-for-granted discourses with the uprisings in 1992 and the indigenous involvement in ousting Presidents Abdalá Bucaram in 1997 and Jamil Mahuad in 2000, which demonstrate their agency in redefining and rewriting their own history.

The second myth, the *mito del Señorío sobre el suelo* (myth of land sovereignty) held Ecuadorians of Hispanic descent as owners of their territories because Spaniards were able to control the savage Andean geography, which the native indigenous population could not. As a result, indigenous people are melancholic and submissive by nature. However, this myth was invalidated by Peru's invasion in 1941 and the wars in 1981 and 1995, which displayed the government's failure to defend Ecuador's territory. The bilateral peace treaty in

1998 declared the conflict zone an international park and for the moment has ended a long-standing rivalry.

These two inter-related myths undervalued the indigenous population and regarded the Spanish conquest and *mestizaje* as the foundation of a progressive and civilizing nation. These myths also legitimated the leadership of the upper-middle classes in pursuing a national project to integrate Ecuador's pluri-ethnic population.

REGIONALISM

From 1563 to the country's independence in 1822, Ecuador was known as the Real Audiencia de Quito (Royal Audience of Quito), a vast territory under the jurisdiction of either the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada (Colombia), or the Viceroyalty of Lima (Peru). In the late eighteenth century, the *creole* elites in Hispanic America concentrated the economic power and vindicated an "Americanism," i.e. a *creole* Spaniard conscience that opposed the "metropolitanism," or central power of Iberian Spaniards. The struggle for political power brought about the emancipation of the Spanish colonies in America (Quintero 1991, Ayala Mora 1983).

As mentioned earlier, a strong regionalism has characterized Ecuador since colonial times. The Real Audiencia de Quito had three regional centers—Guayaquil, Quito, and Cuenca—each of which had different economic systems

and interests. Guayaquil was a port city linked to foreign commerce; Quito maintained a *hacienda* system; and Cuenca had a system that combined large *hacienda* estates with that of small farms/properties (Quintero 1991). With the Bourbon Reforms in the 1700s,[6] the three regions were separated: Quito joined the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada, while Guayaquil and Cuenca went to the Viceroyalty of Lima. The three regions maintained few connections to the extent that each declared independence separately: Guayaquil on October 9, 1820, Cuenca on November 3, 1820, and Quito on May 24, 1822. Between 1822 and 1830, the newly independent regions united to become part of Simón Bolívar's Gran Colombia Confederation under the name "Distrito del Sur." Only in 1860 di d Ecuador change its political division to the three continental regions it has today —*Costa, Sierra,* and *Oriente*—plus the Galapagos Islands (Ayala 2004: 70).

With the dissolution of La Gran Colombia in 1830, the Distrito del Sur became the "Republic of Ecuador." Although the name "Quito" was historically linked to previous political formations (the Reino de Quito and the Real Audiencia de Quito), the *creole* elites from Guayaquil and Cuenca were opposed to the selection of this name for the country. Adopting it would have implied a subordination of Guayaquil and Cuenca to the lead of Quito. Instead they adopted the name "Ecuador" which was the scientific name used in 1736 by the French

[6] The Bourbon Reforms were a series of measures taken by the Spanish Crown in the eighteenth century to increase political and economic control over Spain itself, and over its American colonies.

Geodesic Mission to refer to the territories where the equator line was measured. As Ayala points out, the name Ecuador reflects the political antagonism that existed, and still exists among the country's various regions. The elites of Guayaquil and Cuenca preferred to be known as "Ecuadorians" rather than "Quiteños" (people from Quito) (Ayala 2004: 68).

THE ECUADORIAN TERRITORY

The upper-middle classes have constantly used the territorial conflict between Ecuador and Peru to present Peruvians as the southern aggressors who seek expansionism through the armed force, just as Huáscar did with Atahualpa before the Spanish conquest. In 1829, the Peruvian army invaded Ecuador but was defeated in the Battle of Tarqui by Mariscal Antonio José de Sucre.[7] Although a peace treaty was signed, the boundaries between the two countries were not defined. In 1941, Ecuador was again a victim when the Peruvian army invaded Guayaquil in a surprise attack. Ecuador was forced to sign the Protocolo de Río de Janeiro in 1942, a treaty that conceded approximately half of its territories (278,000 sq. kms.) to Peru. The Protocolo had a strong impact on the Ecuadorian collective psyche. Silva points out that Ecuadorians perceived themselves just as they saw the indigenous population, as "losers" and "defeated" (Silva 1992). Benjamín Carrión, one of the most influential Ecuadorian writers and founder of

[7] Ecuador honored Antonio José de Sucre by giving the national currency his name.

the Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana in 1944, described the national conscience as follows:

> The country felt bludgeoned; it felt mutilated in its being, hopeless. Ecuadorians had been taught that one Ecuadorian could beat ten Peruvians, but this did not happen in 1941. There was widespread low morale: we had turned out to be beatable, easily defeatable. We had been betrayed by an internal oligarchy… (Rodríguez Castelo in Quintero 1991: 455).

To overcome the psychological trauma of having been physically diminished, Benjamín Carrión elaborated the thesis of the "*nación pequeña*" (small nation), which held that if Ecuador could not be a great nation through its army and its economy, it would be one through its culture and arts. He supported his thesis with the examples of Israel and Greece, two prominent small nations, each of which has had a strong influence on Western culture. In spite of the "*nación pequeña*" thesis, Ecuador maintained an open psychological wound that was only partially closed in 1998 when the territory under dispute in the Protocolo de Río de Janeiro was declared an international park. Interestingly, the conflict with Peru became a rallying point of national cohesion for more than half a century, uniting Ecuadorians of all walks of life in their desire to defend the nation.

Returning to the discussion about the territorial identity, Silva argues that an "imagined community" normally presumes an "imagined territory" (Silva

2004). In her view, Ecuadorians have had ambiguous ideas about their territory since the signing of the Protocolo in 1942. While international maps showed Ecuador without the territories lost in the Protocolo, Ecuadorian maps and textbooks had continued to show the country's boundaries as they had been before 1942, with a dotted line indicating the incomplete Río de Janeiro territorial division. In the 1960s, President José María Velasco Ibarra declared the Protocolo void, suggesting that the boundary demarcation could not be implemented due to the geographical complexity of the area. Several generations of Ecuadorians, including my own, grew up with ambiguous ideas about Ecuador's size and shape. I remember my reaction of astonishment when I first saw Ecuador's reduced size in an international atlas published abroad. See Figure 1.

Silva conducted an interesting poll to find out how college students conceived of their national boundaries. She asked 130 undergraduate students at a public university to draw the shape of Ecuador in a map of South America. The results were astonishing: 55 students drew the territory as it was before the Protocolo (a triangle shape); 18 drew it the same way, but with the Protocolo line; 9 showed the territory as it is drawn on international maps without the territories lost in the Protocolo; 4 included the Galapagos Islands; and 14 drew a territory undefined in shape (Silva 2004: 83-4). Silva concluded that most Ecuadorians in

their adulthood lack a clear mental image of the country's shape, as did many of the young college students in the poll.

Figure 1. Map of Ecuador with the dotted line. *Atlas Geográfico del Ecuador* (n.d). .

UNIFYING ELEMENTS OF THE ECUADORIAN NATION

Several symbolic elements have contributed to forge a sense of cohesive community in Ecuador since its republican formation. These include a collective perception of a shared territory, the Catholic religion, the national currency (the *sucre),* the territorial conflict with Peru, *música nacional,* and soccer, especially

in the past decade with Ecuador's qualification for the 2002 and 2006 Soccer World Cups.

With the exception of soccer, none of these symbols has endured. The Catholic Church lost its hold over the population with the advent of the Liberal Revolution in 1895 and the secularization of education. Religious freedom and the presence of evangelist missionaries contributed to weaken the monopoly of power that the Catholic Church exerted in the 1860s, when President García Moreno signed a *Concordato* with the Vatican. García Moreno viewed religion as the only means able to integrate a country split by political and economic interests.

The *sucre,* a currency only used in Ecuador and a "frame of reference" with which all Ecuadorians identified, disappeared with the dollarization. Ecuadorian national music *(música nacional)* does not have the commercial visibility it had in its golden period from the 1930s through the 1960s. The "open wound" caused by the Protocolo de Río de Janeiro, which united Ecuadorians from the *Costa* and *Sierra* in wartimes, was closed with the peace treaty of 1998.

With a diasporic population of hundreds of thousands of migrants working in Europe and the United States, Ecuadorian people no longer imagine their territory circumscribed by its national borders. Ecuadorian residents living abroad recreate social spaces that remind them of their nationality. The celebration of the 10-de-Agosto festival in New York and Chicago, for example, celebrates the first

independence movement in America and has become a site for the performance of symbolic nationalism (Pallares 2005). Accordingly, Ecuadorian-Americans reproduce Ecuadorian ambiences in the diaspora to "create memory of place to imaginatively construct their new lived world" (idem). Soccer remains the only unifying element that brings people of different walks of life together because everyone supports the national team when it represents the country in international competitions.

TRANSNATIONAL IDENTITIES

National identities are not only fragmented by regionalism, they are also contested by diasporas and international migrations. With the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Ecuadorians during the economic crisis in 2000, Ecuador has become a country with a de-territorialized population. This migration can best be described as "transnational" because Ecuadorians have become "transmigrants [who] develop and maintain multiple relations—familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political—that span borders" (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc, 1992: 1). Most move back and forth between their home and host countries for various reasons: to attend family celebrations, to open small businesses, to buy land to build the "home of their dreams," or to finance community projects in their home towns such as the construction of schools or sports facilities. As transnational migrants, they nevertheless demand their right to

vote and request the Ecuadorian government's help in resolving their legal status abroad. This sort of migration differs from that of the 1970s when migrants stayed permanently in host countries.

Contemporary Ecuadorian migrants tend to be young. Most are under the age of twenty, and thirty-six percent are under eighteen years of age (Vásquez 2004). Children enter the host country's school system and learn about Ecuador through the migrant community. While some first-generation migrants easily assimilate into to the host society, most resist integration and feel nostalgic for their homeland. With this massive movement of the population, how do Ecuadorians conceive of their nation? What does it mean to be Ecuadorian in the diaspora?

The major newspapers from Guayaquil and Quito, *El Universo* and *El Comercio,* respectively, have created columns and Internet editions that serve to connect migrants with their families in Ecuador. The newspapers print letters and greetings from various places in the world: Toronto, Tel Aviv, London, Madrid, Milan, New York, Berlin, and Santiago de Chile, to cite just a few. Ecuadorian migrants send pictures of the places they live in and announce the birth of their children, their college graduation, their engagement, or their marriage.

Most greetings published in *El Comercio* express nostalgia and revalorization of Ecuadorian culture. Evelyn, a twenty-seven-year-old woman

from Quito who studies biology and has lived in Hannover, Germany since 2000, wrote:

> "I have learned to … appreciate the richness and diversity of our culture, our flora, and our fauna which are without compare. Here, there is a lot of order, but people are closed into themselves, they do not think about the family, only in succeeding for their own well-being. In addition, there is no juice made from fresh fruit, and if you find some, it is not tasty. The food in my country cannot be compared to the food here; I crave a tasty *hornado*,[8] *chugchucaras*,[9] *mote con chicharrón,*[10] *ceviches*[11] from the Rumiñahui … This is a completely different world, developed indeed, but at the same time cold and intended for one purpose only: material well-being. I am sure all [Ecuadorians] who live abroad, for whatever reason, yearn to go back to beautiful Ecuador. There is no place more full of love, peace, and diversity than my homeland." [12]

Transnational migration is changing Ecuadorians' perceptions of "Ecuadorianness," particularly because the national imaginary is taking place in territories outside Ecuador's borders. Interestingly, while upper-middle-class Ecuadorians living in Ecuador look down upon local cultural forms, Ecuadorian migrants find new value in their culture, their food, and their traditional social relations. They gather each weekend to remember the nation by sharing its music, cuisine, sports, and by socializing with co-nationals.

[8] Roasted pork
[9] Thin slice of grilled beef
[10] Fried pork rinds
[11] Shrimp cocktail
[12] *El Comercio*, "Ecuatorianos en el mundo," July 18, 2005.

How do Ecuadorians living in Ecuador and overseas imagine their country at the turn of the twenty-first century? A greeting published in the electronic version of *El Comercio* is revealing in this respect. It reads:

> I send greetings from Madrid. I am an Ecuadorian with Spanish nationality and live in Madrid since the year 2000. As all of you, I had to leave my homeland because of the economic situation affecting all social strata. It was due to bad management and thefts of all governments that have led us to the biggest misery of the world.
>
> Being a foreigner is often a source of suffering, but we have to bear this with hopes that our country gets better and someday return to our homeland, wishing that some day we return to our country.
>
> I want to send *greetings to all Ecuadorians in the whole world* [my emphasis] as well as those who are living in Ecuador. I would like to contact any co-national living in England….

> *Envío un fuerte saludo desde Madrid. Soy un ecuatoriano con nacionalidad española, vivo en Madrid desde el año 2000. Al igual que todos vosotros he tenido que salir de mi patria por la situación económica que nos afligía a todos los estratos socials por la mala administración y la pillería de todos los gobiernos de turno que nos han llevado a la miseria más grande del mundo.*
>
> *El ser extranjero en muchas ocasiones nos causa mucho sufrimiento, pero en fin tenemos que soportar en espera que nuestro país mejore con la esperanza de que algún día podamos regresar a nuestra patria.*
>
> *Quiero enviar un fuerte saludo fuerte saludo a todos mis compatriotas que se encuentran en todo el mundo, al igual que a los que se encuentran en Ecuador. Quisiera comunicarme con algún compatriota que viva en Inglaterra…*

The greeting reveals that Ecuadorians conceive of Ecuador as a transnational community made up of countrymen in different locations who are united by bonds of affect and common experience. It also reveals the feelings of many Ecuadorians who love their homeland but are critical of corrupt governments which cannot guarantee a secure and decent life in the home country.

CONCLUSION

The nation is an "empty form" that needs to be filled with images, affects, discourses, and practices. Images of nationhood, however, are often constructed in contradictory ways and reproduced in everyday discourses and cultural practices. Although Ecuador's hegemonic national identity was constructed around the legend of the Ancient Kingdom of Quito, which exalts an aristocratic "Indian" past, negative attitudes toward the indigenous population have been prevalent during most of the twentieth century. The ideology of *mestizaje,* ostensibly supporting the blending of Spanish and Indian cultures, was understood more as aspiration to "whiteness," functioning as a symbol of civilization and modernity, rather than as ethnic and cultural integration. Consequently, most Ecuadorian *mestizos* tend to deny their indigenous roots and look to "whitening" as a means for ascending the hierarchical social ladder. As a mental construct, the Ecuadorian

mestizo nation has existed more in discourse and rhetoric imposed by the dominant classes than in actual practice.

A nation cannot be imagined as a unit when regional identities are stronger than national identities. As seen in this chapter, regionalism in Ecuador stemmed from a struggle for political and economic power between the dominant classes of the *Costa* and the *Sierra,* rather than on geographical and climatic differences, as many Ecuadorians believe today. Transnational migration also challenges the way Ecuadorians conceive of their de-territorialized nation and their (inter)national identity. When Ecuadorian migrants living in Spain request their government to help them legalize their residence status in the host country, or when they send greetings to their Ecuadorian fellows living all over the world, they are imagining a nation spread across the world and without boundaries.

Ecuadorians emigrate not only with their families, but also with their music, cuisine, and other cultural traditions, which help them re-create a piece of Ecuador abroad and cope with their nostalgia for the Homeland. In the re-creation of Ecuadorian cultural practices Ecuadorians articulate new meanings and national expressions. This is especially observed in the uses, functions, and categorization of various types of Ecuadorian popular music, which are now called *música nacional.*

CHAPTER 2

LA MÚSICA NACIONAL (THE NATIONAL MUSIC)

I attended countless concerts of Ecuadorian popular music during my stay in Quito between November 2001 and September 2004. Some of them were massive concerts organized in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo, a basketball arena located in the Plaza Marín; others were middle-sized concerts organized in the Teatro Nacional of the Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, located just across the Parque El Ejido and the Embassies of the United States and France. The patrons who attended the concerts at the Teatro Nacional were unlikely to go to the Plaza Marín, and vice versa, because the music repertoire and the social prestige of each place was markedly different. The patrons of the Teatro Nacional were made up of older and middle-aged people who enjoyed singing the old traditional *pasillos* from the 1920s through the 1950s, while the audience in the Plaza Marín was a younger generation eager to listen and dance to happy Ecuadorian music. Economic and social class differences also distinguished both audiences. Middle- and upper-middle class people formed the audience in the Teatro Nacional, while that of the Plaza Marín was made up of rural migrants and working-class people. When I asked both groups if the music performed at the concert was Ecuadorian

music, they usually responded, "Yes, it is *música nacional* (national music)." Gradually, I came to realize how important the term *música nacional* was in the construction of dominant and popular representations of Ecuadorian identity, to such an extent that one of the analytical perspectives of this study is centered on the discursive use of this term.

This chapter examines the emergence of the term *música nacional* as a surrogate appellation for Ecuadorian music. I include a brief description and musical examples of the main genres regarded as *música nacional.* I also introduce the reader to the best-known authors, composers, and performers of *música nacional,* all of whom are part of nationalist discourses advocating the standing of the *pasillo* as the emblematic music of Ecuador. Knowing the musical characteristics and the social contexts where these genres originated will help the reader understand the discourses and debates around *música chicha* and *música rocolera,* two styles of music transforming *música nacional* genres, which emerged as a result of the rural migration and modernization of the country in the 1970s.

***

It is worth noting that while citizens from other Latin American countries generally identify their urban popular music with the name of the country—*"la música colombiana," "la música cubana," "la música mexicana,"* or *"la música*

peruana"—Ecuadorians from all social classes use instead the term *música nacional* as a surrogate name for *"música ecuatoriana." Música nacional* is a category that points to an anthology of songs composed in the period between the 1920s and 1950s, which have been canonized as the quintessential body of Ecuadorian music and are well known to most middle-aged and elder Ecuadorians. This anthology consists of urbanized renditions of folk genres of indigenous and *mestizo* origin. The first group includes the *yaraví,* the *danzante,* the *yumbo,* and the *sanjuanito.* The second group includes the *fox incaico,* the *albazo,* the *aire típico,* the *pasacalle,* and the *pasillo.* Of all these genres, the *pasillo* stands out as the musical symbol of the nation, which explains why intellectuals, journalists, and common people frequently interchange the terms *música nacional* and *pasillo* as if these were synonymous.

Another striking feature of Ecuadorian popular music is the fact that most *mestizo*-derived genres are regarded as emblematic of both the *Costa* and the *Sierra* (Espinosa n/a: 184). In other Latin American countries, musical genres are usually associated with distinct regions or ethnic groups. In Peru, for example, the coastal region is associated with *música criolla (marineras* and *valses),* while the highlands are associated with *música andina (huaynos).* Colombia has five geographical regions, each represented by distinct musical genres: in the Atlantic coast region, *música tropical (cumbias, porros, vallenatos);* in the highlands,

música andina (bambucos, pasillos, and torbellinos); in the plains, *música llanera (joropo);* on the Pacific coast, *música de marimba (currulao);* and in the Amazon region, indigenous music. In Cuba, *música guajira* and Afro-Cuban music represent distinctive ethnic repertoires and genres. In Ecuador, however, there are not many urban musical genres that distinguish the *Costa* from the *Sierra. Mestizo* genres such as *pasillos, albazos,* and *pasacalles* are popular throughout the country and can hardly be classified as coastal or highland music.

It is worth noting that upper-middle-class Ecuadorians consider the few *sanjuanitos* and *yaravíes* that have entered the *música nacional* anthology as "national" rather than as indigenous music. This is not to say that the upper-middle classes do not recognize the indigenous roots of the music; they certainly do. Through a process of music "cleansing," which includes changes in the lyrical content and stylization of the musical arrangements, the new versions have been re-signified and associated with an upper-middle-class aesthetic.

Ethnic musics from the *Costa, Sierra,* and *Oriente* are not considered part of the *música nacional* anthology. Some exist in folkloric renditions such as *música montubia* (peasant music from the coast); others are reproduced in regional contexts such as *música de marimba* and *bombas* (Afro-Ecuadorian music from the province of Esmeraldas and the Chota Valley, respectively).

Traditional musics from the highland and Amazon regions are normally confined to the indigenous communities of which they are a part.

THE ORIGIN OF *MÚSICA NACIONAL*

To my knowledge, no written evidence has been found documenting the use of the term *música nacional* in the nineteenth century. According to sociologist Hernán Ibarra, *música nacional* is a relatively modern term associated with the rise of the middle classes in Ecuador in the early twentieth century (1998: 52). Ibarra suggests that the notion of *música nacional* might have emerged concurrently with the officialization of other national symbols such as the *sucre,* the national currency adopted in 1895. It is also possible that the term became popular in the early 1900s when the first Ecuadorian songs ever recorded began to be identified with Ecuador, as opposed to "foreign musics," such as the *tango,* the *rumba,* and the *bolero* that Columbia and Victor Records promoted in Ecuador.

Most genres regarded as *música nacional* today did not exist in the nineteenth century. The elites danced to European ballroom dances such as *mazurcas, waltzes, polkas,* and *pasodobles* on the one hand, and *creole*[13] dances

[13] The term "creole dance" refers here to European dances that were adapted to the Latin American environment. The European waltz, for example, was transformed into various types of *vals del país* (country's waltz), which received the name of *pasillo* in Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. Changes in the melodic contour, rhythmic structure, dance steps, and choreographies differentiated the *pasillo* from the European waltz.

such as *rondeñas, zapateados, quiteñas,*[14] *chilenas* and the *alza que te han visto* on the other. These musical genres and dances have since been lost. Why did these *creole* genres not enter the *música nacional* repertoire while other folk genres like the *sanjuanto,* the *yaraví,* and the *pasillo* did? To answer this question we need to examine prevalent nineteenth-century notions of nationhood and nationalism in Latin America.

The idea of nations possessing distinctive national styles of music representing the "spirit of the people" derives from nineteenth-century European conceptions of nationalism. According to Dalhaus (1980), notions of nationalism and universalism were not as mutually exclusive as they are today because the idea of being "nationalist" was roughly equivalent to the idea of being "cosmopolitan," that is, "being in the world." It was only with the development of capitalism in the second half of the nineteenth century that nationalism became more "introverted" and "xenophobic," and the elites raised folk music to the level of national symbols (idem).

Turino's analysis of the emergence of nationalism in Latin America is pertinent to understanding this process. Turino argues that the modern concept of the nation as "a culturally and linguistically unified group" within a bounded

[14] According to the few manuscripts of *rondeñas*, *quiteñas*, and *zapateados* I have found in music archives, these were creole genres with no indigenous musical traits. This is observed in the absence of pentatonic melodies and non-Western rhythmic patterns. The dances were probably not popular among the popular classes in Quito and other highland cities.

territory did not exist in nineteenth-century Latin America (2003: 170-174). Instead, the elites were culturally similar to Spaniards and other Latin American *creole* elites, and conceived of the nation as a loose collective of landowners with economic and political power. For Turino, the view of the nation as a unified population emerged only in the early twentieth century with the rise of populist movements. Accordingly, the subaltern populations began to be associated with the nation-state because they were the labor force and consumers of an expanding capitalist production. It was only at this point that the elites sought distinctive symbolic cultural expressions of the nation. Before this period, they were more interested in establishing cultural differences with the indigenous, *mestizo,* and African populations, rather than with citizens from other nations. Musically, this argument is reflected in the fact that there were no major stylistic differences between nineteenth-century South American *creole* musics, most of which were *zapateado*-like (foot-tapping) dances. The Ecuadorian *rondeña* and the *quiteña,* for example, were similar to the Peruvian *zamacueca,* also known in Chile and Peru as the *cueca,* the *marinera,* or the *chilena.*

This period coincided with the emergence of *Costumbrismo,* a cultural trend in Spanish literature that depicted the everyday manners and customs of a particular social or provincial milieu. In Ecuador, *Costumbrismo* incorporated indigenous themes in the arts, albeit in a romanticized fashion. In "Vendedora de

empanadas" (Tortilla Seller), Juan Agustín Guerrero, a composer, painter, and compiler of Ecuadorian folk music, depicts an indigenous woman making *tortillas* and cooking them on the oven. Her facial expression is neutral and does not reflect the miserable conditions in which indigenous people lived. See Figure 2.

"Cumandá," the first romantic novel written in Ecuador by Juan León Mera, portrays a tragic love story of a white woman (Cumandá) lost in the jungle when she was an infant and raised as an Indian, and a white man (Carlos), who arrives in the jungle, falls in love with her but happens to be her older brother. This novel is in essence a Western love story in a jungle setting, and is considered a foundational fiction portraying a romanticized view of the racial encounter between Hispanic and indigenous people. This encounter, marked by an incestuous relationship that ends with the death of Cumandá, reflects the complex racial relations of the time in the elites' minds.

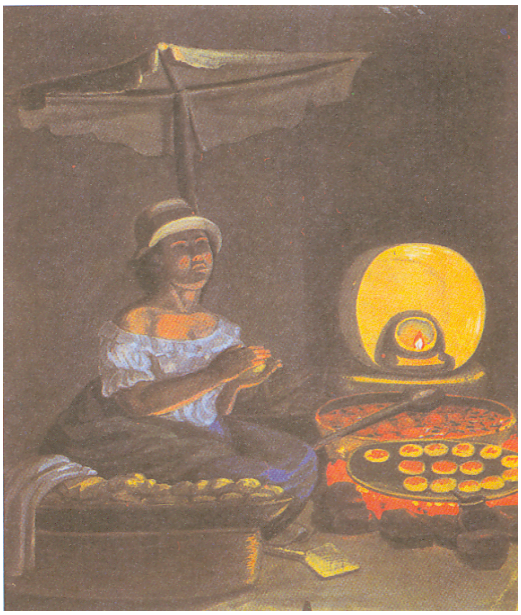


Figure 2. *Vendedora de empanadas* (Tortilla Seller).
Juan Agustín Guerrero. (1818-1880).

In the 1930s, intellectuals and artists provided new images of an "imagined community" in their writing, music, and art work. The novel *A la Costa* by José A. Martínez pioneered this literary movement by depicting social and regional conflicts between people from the *Costa* and *Sierra,* thus providing a complex picture of the nation. Martínez' novel created the basis for the emergence of *Indigenismo*, a social and cultural movement in the 1930s which denounced the exploitation of indigenous people by *hacendados* (landowners). In this period, young socialist writers from the *Costa,* known as the "Generación de los Treinta" (Thirties Generation) also denounced the exploitation of *montubios* (peasants from the coastal provinces), *mulattos,* and Afro-Ecuadorians. By

introducing their speech manners (slang) into literature and discussing their histories of exploitation, these writers challenged a nation that disdained "the dark skin of society."

Figure 3. Oswaldo Guayasamín. "Páramo," *Huacayñán* (1945-1951).

In the fine arts, the paintings of Eduardo Kingman and Oswaldo Guayasamín provided analogous representations of the anguish and exploitation of people of color. The artists accomplished this largely through depictions of deformed indigenous faces and hands, which contrasted noticeably with the idealized indigenous images of *Costumbrismo.* "Páramo" (Plateau), a painting by Guayasamín from the collection *Huacayñán*, portrays an indigenous woman with an expression of impotence and deep pain in her face and hands. The gray tones

of the painting and a close-up of the hands and face highlight the message. See Figure 3.

Nationalist composers created sonic images of the nation by stylizing indigenous and *mestizo* folk dances for piano and orchestra. This compositional method became the basis for the construction of an academic musical nationalism throughout Latin America. In my analysis, the term "musical nationalism" does not only refer to the borrowing of folk music elements as prime material for art compositions. Following Dalhaus' views, I regard musical nationalism as any musical expression that embodies national sentiment for its listeners.

In Ecuador, the nationalist trend emerged only in the early 1900s with the arrival in Quito of Domingo Brescia, an Italian composer who encouraged his students to use Ecuadorian folk dances in their compositions. The first self-conscious nationalist works were simply stylizations of *música nacional* genres for piano or orchestra, which were arranged as a collection of folk dances usually known as *suite ecuatoriana.* Musicologist Segundo Luis Moreno (1882-1972), who was a student of Brescia from 1906 to 1911, composed two *suites ecuatorianas,* the second of which included the *danzante,* the *sanjuanito,* the *yaraví,* the *pasillo,* and the *rondeña.* In general, the *suite ecuatoriana* followed the typical dance sequence of a baroque suite (the *allemanda,* the *courante,* the *zarabanda,* the *minuet,* and the *giga).* The first two dances, the *danzante* and the

sanjuanito had similar moderate tempos to those of the *allemanda* and *courante.* These were followed by the slow *yaraví,* reminiscent of the *zarabanda;* the *pasillo,* a triple-meter dance like the *minuet;* and the *rondeña,* a fast-tempo dance like the *giga.*

All nationalist composers from the first half of the twentieth century, like Sixto María Durán, Francisco Salgado, Luis Humberto Salgado, and Corsino Durán borrowed or created original folk themes in their music. The musical production of Ecuadorian composers, however, did not follow the social realism that characterized the works of contemporary writers and artists. These composers treated the indigenous theme in an idealized manner perpetuating the image of the "archaeological Indian" so-much praised by the elites. Most composers at this time wrote symphonic works about Atahualpa's death and the dusk of the Tahuantinsuyo. As seen, composers were divorced from the social trend that permeated the other Ecuadorian arts.

MÚSICA NACIONAL GENRES

This section provides a description of the most popular *música nacional* genres in the twentieth century: the *yaraví,* the *danzante,* the *yumbo,* the *sanjuanito,* the *fox incaico,* the *albazo,* the *pasacalle,* and the *pasillo.* In essence, these genres are urbanized renditions of folk and traditional dances usually sung to the accompaniment of guitars and *requinto* (a small five-string high-pitched

guitar). Most have pentatonic-based melodies and *sesquiáltera* rhythms, which point to the blending of indigenous and Hispanic musical elements.

YARAVÍ

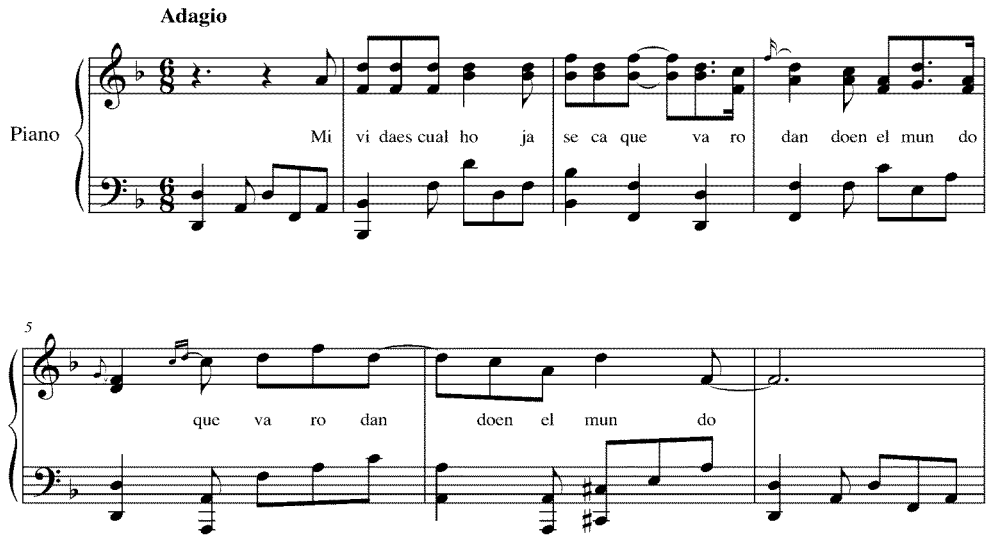
The *yaraví,* known in Peru as the *arawi,* is an Andean song genre characterized by a slow tempo, a minor mode, and a melancholy character. In the nineteenth century, most indigenous songs were called *yaravíes,* regardless of their rhythmic pattern, function, or lyrical content. Juan Agustín Guerrero transcribed in 1889 a collection of twenty *yaravíes* for the Second Congress of Americanists held in Spain (Guerrero 1993). He described this genre as follows: "[F]or a person from Quito, there is no better heart-felt music than the *yaraví;* he weeps and amuses himself with it…" (my translation). The indigenous *yaraví* is associated with the timbre of Andean instruments like the *pingullo* (a vertical cane flute with three holes) and the *rondador* (a single-unit panpipe of 8-34 tubes arranged in a zig-zag shape). By contrast, the stylized urban rendition is notated in a compound binary meter and incorporates lyrics that usually deal with suffering and nostalgia for the homeland and the family. The *yaraví* often ends with a fast section called the *albazo*, which is in essence an up-tempo yaraví (Guevara 1990).

At the turn of the twentieth century, military bands used to perform *yaravíes* in *retretas* (outdoor concerts) organized every Thursday evening and Sunday morning in the parks. Columbia Records recorded several *yaravíes* in the

1910s, however, only one—"Puñales" (Daggers) by Ulpiano Benítez—has survived in the *música nacional* anthology. Its lyrics express oddly ambivalent emotions representing the dualism of the Andean cosmovision in which every aspect of life is seen as having its counterpart—male/female, day/night, wet/dry, sadness/joy. "Puñales" expresses this complementary opposition by using contrasting metaphors such as the idea of "crying" and "rejoicing" in singing, and by juxtaposing a slow-tempo section in the beginning with the rapid *albazo* at the end of the song.

"Puñales"

Mi vida es cual hoja seca	My life is like a dry leaf
Que va rodando en el mundo	That is roaming about the world
No tiene ningún consuelo,	It finds no solace
No tiene ningún halago	It finds no affection
Por eso cuando me quejo	For that reason when I complain
Mi alma padece llorando	My soul suffers as well, crying
Mi alma se alegra cantando.	My soul rejoices, singing.
Cantando mis pocas dichas	Singing about the few joys I have
Llorando mis desventuras	Crying out my misfortunes
Camino sin rumbo cierto	I walk without a clear direction
Sufriendo esta cruel herida	Suffering because of this cruel wound
Y al fin me ha de dar la muerte	And finally death will give me
Lo que me niega la vida.	What life denies me.
Albazo:	
Que mala suerte tienen los pobres	What bad luck poor people have
Que hasta los perros le andan mordiendo	Even dogs bite them
Así es la vida guambrita	This is life, little girl
Ir por el mundo, bonita,	To wander through the world, pretty girl
Siempre sufriendo.	Always suffering.



Music Score 1. Source: Guerrero, Pablo. *Album Musical. Enciclopedia de la Música Ecuatoriana. Partituras*. Tomo II.

The indigenous character is found in the pentatonic flavor and the sliding-notes in the melody, which reproduce the sound effect of the panpipe blowing. Both elements, together with the swaying rhythm of the bass line and the performer's weepy singing style, reinforce the idea of the *yaraví* as a lament song. The harmonic accompaniment and the *sesquiáltera* in the third measure show the Hispanic influence in the *yaraví.* Listen to CD, Example No. 1.

YUMBO

The *yumbo* is an indigenous musical genre and dance of Pre-Inca origin that is currently performed in indigenous rituals such as the Corpus Christi. The *yumbo* is an energetic and fast-tempo dance. Its typical rhythmic pattern is made

up of sequences of short-long notes, often notated as an accentuated eighth note followed by a quarter note in a binary compound meter. In general, the *yumbo* is an instrumental music performed as a pipe and tabor tradition in the ritual context. With the introduction of the Spanish guitar in *mestizo* music, the *yumbo* became more elaborate in terms of harmony and musical form. Musicologist Segundo Luis Moreno has described the *yumbo* as a gracious dance indigenous people danced to in rituals and festivals. Interestingly, there are no examples of urbanized *yumbos* in the *música nacional* anthology.

The term *yumbo,* which in Quichua means "sorcerer," also refers to the dancers and inhabitants of the jungle. Chroniclers and travelers, however, have used this word indistinctively to refer to both indigenous groups from the Amazon and highland regions of Ecuador (Moreno 1996). The *yumbo* is popular in the mid-highland provinces of Chimborazo and Cotopaxi. Since the late 1990s, it has been modernized with arrangements including synthesizers and percussion instruments, which makes the music more appealing to the younger indigenous generations. Ángel Guaraca, a charismatic "Indian singer" from Riobamba, has revitalized the *yumbo* with new lyrics dealing with indigenous national pride. Listen to CD, Example No. 2.

DANZANTE

The *danzante* is a ritual dance also performed during the Corpus Christi celebrations in honor of the *Pachamama,* or Mother Earth, for the blessings she has given the people. This dance is performed in the central highland region, especially in the towns of Pujilí (province of Cotopaxi) and Salasaca (province of Tungurahua). *Danzante* is also the name of the dancer, who is famous for his headdress and breastplate adorned with coins, bells, and pieces of mirrors. The participants dance in small circles to the accompaniment of a *pingullo* (vertical flute) and *tamboril* (drum). In past decades, *bandas de pueblo* (small brass bands) also marched behind the *danzantes* providing a louder musical accompaniment.

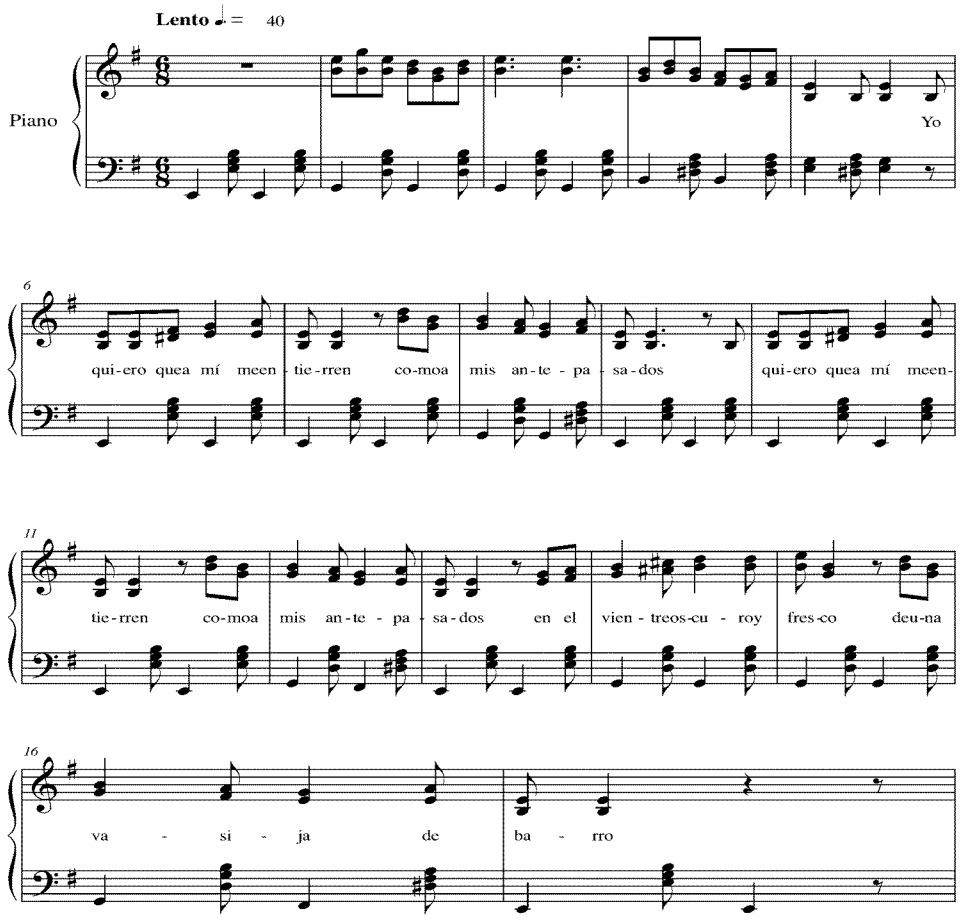
Musically, the *danzante* is characterized by a sequence of long-short notes, usually notated as a quarter note followed by an eighth note (the opposite of the *yumbo* rhythm). The urbanized and indigenous renditions are significantly different in that the former includes Spanish lyrics, a regular beat, a slower tempo, and a melancholy character. In contrast, the indigenous form is faster, festive, and instrumental. The melody usually consists of short phrases that are repeated with slight variations.

The only urban *danzante* that has entered the *música nacional* anthology is "Vasija de barro" (Clay Pot), written in 1950 by a group of Ecuadorian intellectuals at a bohemian gathering in Oswaldo Guayasamín's house. The authors included renowned writers Jorge Carrera Andrade, Hugo Alemán, and

Jorge Enrique Adoum, and the painter Jaime Valencia, each of which wrote one stanza of the poem. Luis Alberto Valencia and Gonzalo Benítez set the lyrics to music. The history of "Vasija de barro" has been recounted myriad times and is probably one of the best known *música nacional* songs within and outside Ecuador.

"Vasija de barro"

Yo quiero que a mí me entierren	I want to be buried
Como a mis antepasados	Like my ancestors
En el vientre oscuro y fresco	In the dark and cool womb
De una vasija de barro.	Of a clay pot.
Cuando la vida se pierde	When life is lost
Tras una cortina de años	Behind a curtain of years
Vivirán a flor de tiempos	Love and disenchantments
Amores y desengaños.	Will live on in the flowering of time.



Music Score 2. Source: *Album Musical Ecuatoriano*. Partituras para piano. (n/d) Guayaquil: Sadram.

The minor mode and the regular pulsation of the quarter and eighth notes in the bass line provide a solemn character that emphasizes the lyrical content about death and being buried in a clay pot as a symbolic way of returning back to the Earth Mother, the place to which one belongs. The pentatonic melody points to the indigenous roots of the genre. The progression of I-III-V-I in the

introduction of the piece presents typical harmonic patterns reflecting the bimodal character of Ecuadorian music. Listen to CD, Example No. 3.

SANJUANITO

The *sanjuanito* or *sanjuan* is a song-dance genre of pre-Hispanic origin popular throughout the highland region of Ecuador. In the province of Imbabura, the *sanjuanito* is performed during the Inti Raymi festival (summer solstice), which coincides with the Catholic celebration of Saint John's day on June 24th where indigenous peasants thank the *Pachamama* with food, music, and dance for the harvest she has bestowed. There are several hypotheses explaining the name and origin of the *sanjuanito.* One relates the dance to San Juan, the patron saint (Coba 1985). A second version suggests that the *sanjuanito* is derived from the Peruvian *huayno* or *huaynito* (Béhague 1996). The *sanjuanito* has lively character, binary meter, pentatonic-based melodies, and prominence of the minor mode. The *sanjuanito,* however, differentiates from the *huayno* in the affluence of the four-sixteenth-note rhythmic pattern and a moderate use of syncopated rhythms.

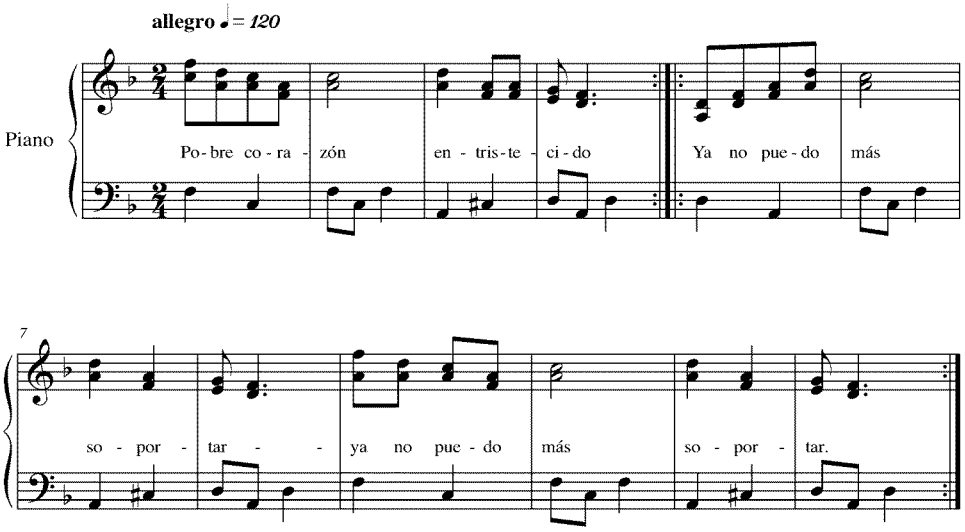
There are two types of *sanjuanito:* the indigenous *sanjuanito* and the *sanjuán de blancos (sanjuan* of white people) or *sanjuanito mestizo*. They diverge in musical structure, uses, functions, and social contexts. The former is basically an instrumental piece played in a ritual context by two indigenous flutes. These

instruments play short heterophonic melodies that are repeated with slight variations to the accompaniment of a *bombo* (drum). Participants dance in circles around the musicians on the eve of Saint John's Day. By contrast, the *sanjuanito mestizo* has binary form and a more elaborate instrumentation, which includes guitar, accordion, violin, and/or flute.

Despite their enormous popularity in the first half of the twentieth century, as music scores for military bands demonstrate, there are few *sanjuanitos* in the current *música nacional* anthology. The most popular is "Pobre corazón" (Poor Heart), composed in 1917 by Guillermo Garzón, whose lyrics talk about separation and the sadness of love.

"Pobre corazón"

Pobre corazón entristecido	Poor saddened heart
Ya no puedo más soportar.	I cannot take it anymore.
Y al decirte adiós, yo me despido	In bidding farewell, I leave you
Con el alma, con la vida	With my soul, with my life
Con el corazón entristecido.	With a saddened heart.



Music Score 3. Source: *Guillermo Garzón. Canciones, letras y partituras*. (n.d) Guayaquil: Sadram.

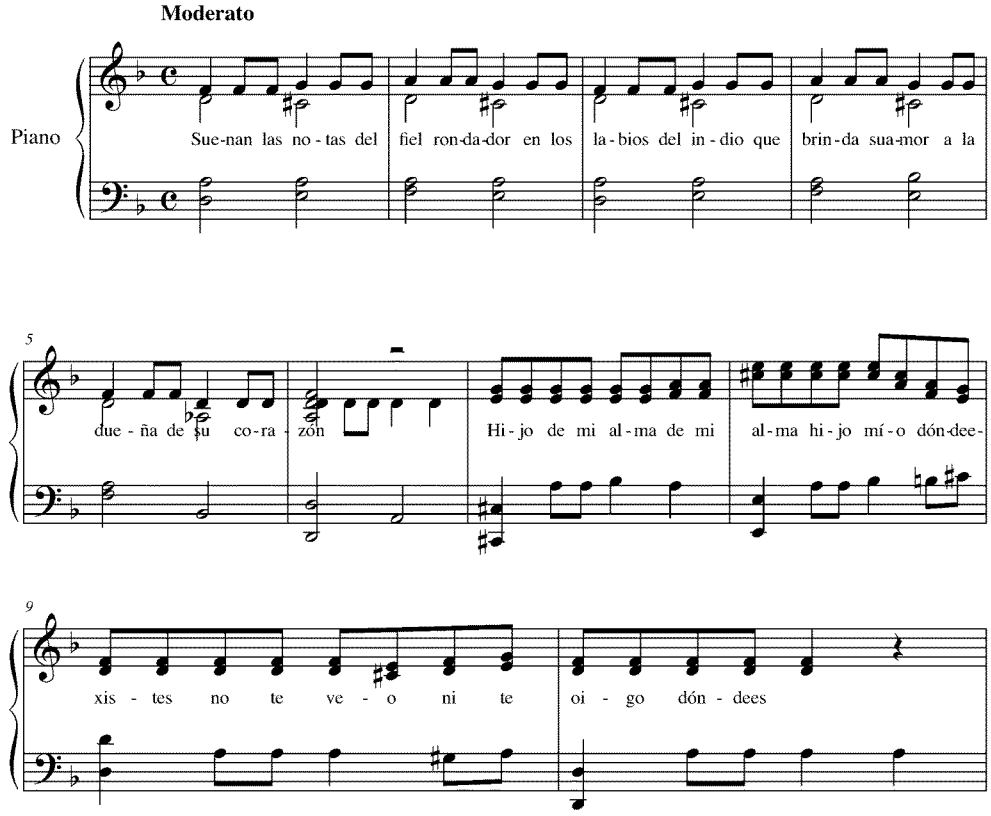
This piece keeps a pentatonic melodic contour; however, the rhythm avoids the four sixteenth-note formula of the typical *sanjuanito mestizo* (see p. 197). The harmonic progression of I-III-V-I in the minor mode gives this song the Ecuadorian "flavor" also present in the above *danzante.* The rhythm in the base line imitates the drum pattern in duple meter that usually accompanies this song. Overall, this *sanjuanito* of the national anthology keeps indigenous musical features but is significantly different from both the indigenous and *mestizo sanjuanitos*. Listen to CD, Example No. 4.

FOX INCAICO

Also known as *fox shimmy, fox indiano, fox nativo,* or *canción incaica,* the *fox incaico* combined Andean melodies with the North American fox trot rhythm and was a very popular dance in the first half of the twentieth century. By the second half of the century, the *fox incaico* lost its dance function and was transformed into a slow-tempo song suitable for listening. "La bocina" (The Horn), "Collar de lágrimas" (Necklace of Tears), and "La canción de los Andes" (The Song of the Andes) are three popular *fox incaicos* that have entered the *música nacional* anthology and are synonymous with sadness and solitude. The example below, "La canción de los Andes" by Constantino Mendoza, shows the typical *fox trot* rhythmic pattern combined with a pentatonic melody.

"La bocina"

En las alturas de las montañas	In the height of the mountains
Existe un pobre rancho	There is a poor ranch
Una viejita todas las tardes	Every afternoon an old woman
Llora y suspira ahí:	Cries and sighs there
Triste es la vida así	Sad is life like this
Quiero mejor morir.	I prefer to die.
Suenan las notas del fiel rondador	Sound the old notes of the faithful panpipe
En los labios del indio	In the lips of the Indian
Que brinda su amor	That gives his love
A la dueña de su corazón.	To the owner of his heart.



Music Score 4. Source: Aguirre, Ermel. *Antología de la música ecuatoriana. Letras, acordes, partituras, compositores* (n.d.).

The fox rhythmic pattern appears in the rhythm of the melody from measure 1-6; then it switches to the base line in measure 7. The change of tempo (and function) of the *fox trot* from the early twentieth century and the *fox trot* of the national anthology is observed in the meter used in the transcription of the piece. While the original *fox trot* was notated in 2/2 meter, the Ecuadorian version is now notated in 4/4. Listen to CD, Example No. 5.

ALBAZO

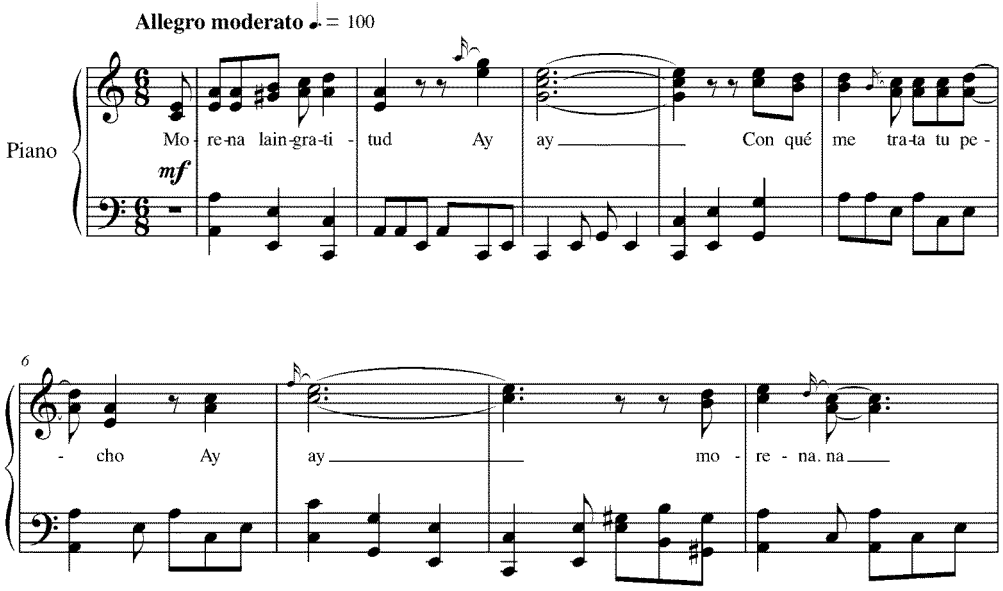
The *albazo* derives from the Spanish *alborada*, a music performed at dawn during religious festivities. In the eighteenth century, government authorities prohibited public performances of *albazos* due to the cheerful and noisy atmosphere they generated. The *albazo* combines musical features from the Spanish and indigenous cultures. Considered a fast-tempo *yaraví,* the *albazo* alternates 3/4 and 6/8 meters *(sesquiáltera)* in complex guitar-strumming patterns. These are formed by different combinations of hand movements such as downstrokes, upstrokes, stopping the strings with the strumming hand, and drawing the fingers across the strings producing syncopated rhythms and accentuation of specific beats. Despite its lively tempo, the *albazo* has a melancholy character due to the pentatonic flavor of the melodies and prominence of the minor mode. Other forms of *albazo* are known with the Quichua words *saltashpa, cachullapi,* and *capishca,* terms that have no specific translation or meaning in Quichua.

Most *albazos* can be recognized by the lyrics written in *coplas* (short verses), which often include Spanish expressions of pain or complaint such as *"ayayay."* The lyrical content varies from unrequited love to mischievous topics, though most are centered on love deceptions. The most popular *albazos* are: "Avecilla" (Little Bird), "Morena la ingratitud" (The Ungrateful Dark-Skin Woman), and "Si tú me olvidas" (If You Forget Me). The title and the lyrics of

the latter, originally composed by Jorge Araújo Chiriboga, were changed to "This My Beautiful Land" *(Esta mi tierra linda),* a song that praises the beauty of the country's landscapes and people. This song often precedes a medley of songs devoted to various Ecuadorian cities and provinces.

"Morena la ingratitud"

Morena la ingratitud, ayay	Dark-skin woman, the ungratefulness, ayay
Con qué me trata tu pecho	How your breast treats me
Ayay morena	Ayay, dark-skin woman
Hacen que de tí me aleje	They distance me from you
Ayayay, ayayayay	Ayayay, ayayayay
Entre lágrimas deshecho	In between tears, I am down
Ayay morena.	Ayay, dark-skin woman.



Music Score 5. Source: Guerrero, Pablo. *Album Musical. Enciclopedia de la Música Ecuatoriana. Partituras*. Tomo II.

"Morena la ingratitud" has all musical features typical of Ecuadorian *mestizo* music—*sesquiáltera* rhythms notated in a 6/8 meter, harmonic progressions of I, III, V, I in the minor mode, and pentatonic melodies. Many Ecuadorian songs end in cadences with the third note of the tonic chord and this *albazo* is no exception. The descending intervals of fourth and third in the melody give this piece a lament character. Listen to CD, Example No. 6.

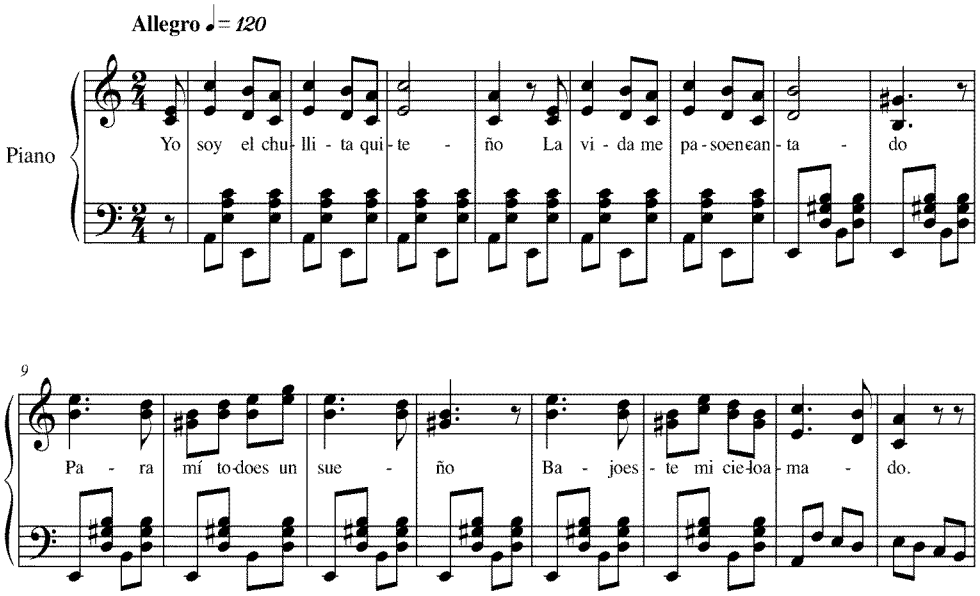
PASACALLE

The *pasacalle,* a duple-meter song-dance genre, emerged in the 1940s with the influence of the Spanish *pasodoble,* the European *polka,* and the Mexican *corrido.* Historian Jorge Núñez (1998: 23, 41) defines the *pasacalle* as a "*canción de arraigo*" (song of belonging), *"himno de la patria chica"* (hymn to the small homeland), and *"canción de autoafirmación nacional"* (song of national self-affirmation) because its lyrics allude to love and pride for one's birthplace. In Núñez' view, the *pasacalle* propitiated a "healthy patriotism and the development of a modern Ecuadorian consciousness" in the aftermath of two catastrophic events in the 1940s: 1) the loss of half of Ecuador's territories as a result of the invasion of Peru in 1941, and 2) the devastating earthquake in Ambato on August 5, 1949, in which more than two thousand people died and approximately one hundred thousand people became homeless.

Almost every city and province in Ecuador has a *pasacalle* dedicated to it, and it is generally more popular than the official city anthem. The most popular *pasacalles* include "Chulla quiteño," "Chola cuencana," "Guayaquileño," and "Ambato tierra de flores." By stressing a regional or local identity through the lyrics, the *pasacalle* forges a national conscience in which difference and diversity are accepted in the collective imaginary. This is observed in the public reactions to performances of medleys of *pasacalles*. The *"*Chulla quiteño*"* (A Man from Quito), for example, sings to the city of Quito and the beauty of its women. The *pasacalle* may be danced as an embraced dance while moving in circles with little foot steps.

"El chulla quiteño"

Yo soy el chullita quiteño	I am a man from Quito
La vida me paso encantado	I spend my life enchanted
Para mí todo es un sueño	For me everything is a dream
Bajo éste, mi cielo amado.	Below this, my lovely heaven.
Las lindas chiquillas quiteñas	The beautiful girls from Quito
Son dueñas de mi corazón	Are owners of my heart
No hay mujeres en el mundo	There are no women in the world
Como las de mi canción.	As the women of my song.



Music Score 6. Source: *Canciones de Quito*. 1993. Quito: Municipio de Quito.

The duple meter, lively tempo, and simple accompaniment of I-V harmonies are typical features of the *pasacalle*. In this piano transcription, the melody is played in parallel sixths and the accompaniment is formed by eighth notes showing broken chords, which is the way it is performed in the guitar. Listen to CD, Example No. 7.

PASILLO

The *pasillo,* introduced to what is today Ecuador from Colombia during the wars of independence in the early 1820s, has held different functions over time. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the *pasillo* was a dance and instrumental genre performed by military bands and *estudiantinas* (ensemble of

guitar-like instruments) in outdoor venues. The *pasillo* also became a salon music genre written by composers with conservatory training, like Aparicio Córdoba (c.1840-1934) and Sixto María Durán (1875-1947). At the turn of the twentieth century the *pasillo* was transformed from a purely instrumental music into a lively vocal form frequently sung in serenades. In the mid-twentieth century, the *pasillo* lost its danceable function and became a sentimental song. Further research needs to be done to determine why people stopped dancing to the *pasillo*. This was perhaps part of the resignification process that made the *pasillo* the elite musical symbol of Ecuador.

Unfortunately, there are few written accounts of the *pasillo's* dance choreography. According to elder people, the *pasillo* was a gracious dance with short, jump-like steps; it was still danced in the 1940s. In fact, the name *pasillo* is a diminutive form of *"paso"* (step). Younger Ecuadorians are unaware that the *pasillo* was a dance and regard it only as a sad song. Only in recent years have professional dance schools attempted to "folklorize" the *pasillo* with choreographies and outfits that recall late nineteenth-century traditions.

The *pasillo* is in essence a poem of three or four stanzas set to music. Derived from the waltz, the *pasillo* has its characteristic rhythmic pattern (see graph 1). The harmonic accompaniment is based on simple European-derived tonal patterns (I-V, I-IV-V-I), often enriched with brief modulations to the

secondary dominant (I---DD—>V, I---DD—>IV) in a major key. While *sesquiáltera* was characteristic of early vocal *pasillos,* a more regular 3/4 meter has become standard since the 1950s. In the 1920s and 1930s, traditional *pasillos* were often written in three or four sections, each of which developed new melodic material. By the mid-twentieth century, however, a binary form and a predominance of minor keys became the norm. The *pasillo* is typically sung in parallel thirds and played to the accompaniment of guitars and *requinto* (a small high-pitched guitar). The latter provides melodic embellishment to the main theme.

Graphic 1.

Waltz Pasillo

Early-twentieth-century *pasillos* had a regular waltz rhythm, as 78-rpm records show. Piano transcriptions from this period present a variety of rhythms corresponding to the guitar strumming patterns played in the accompaniment. It took several decades to standardize the musical form and instrumentation this genre has today.

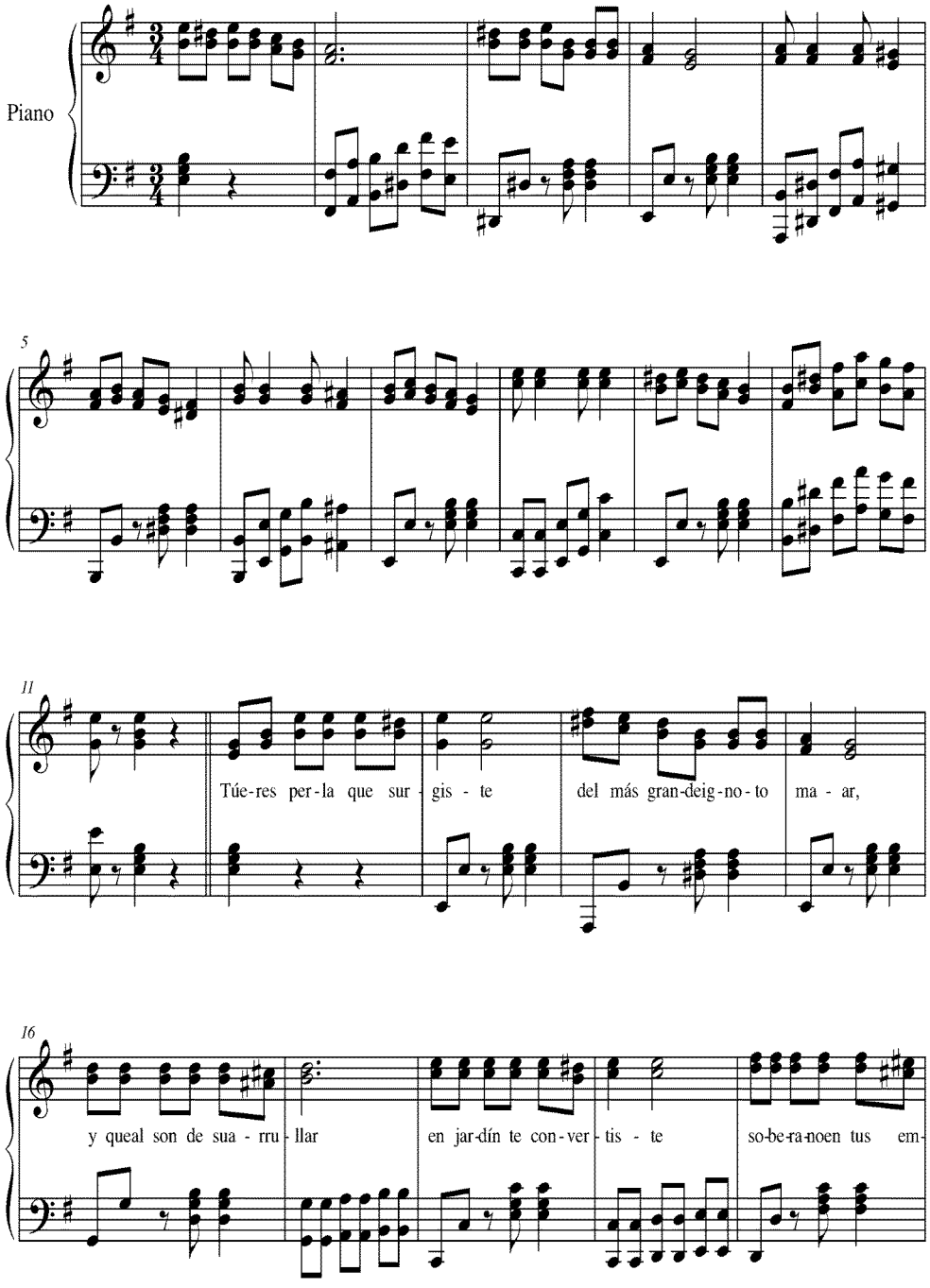
In the early twentieth century, the Ecuadorian and Colombian *pasillos* were similar in character; however, they are now stylistically different. The Colombian *pasillo* was typically played by ensembles of *bandolas* (a 14-16-string

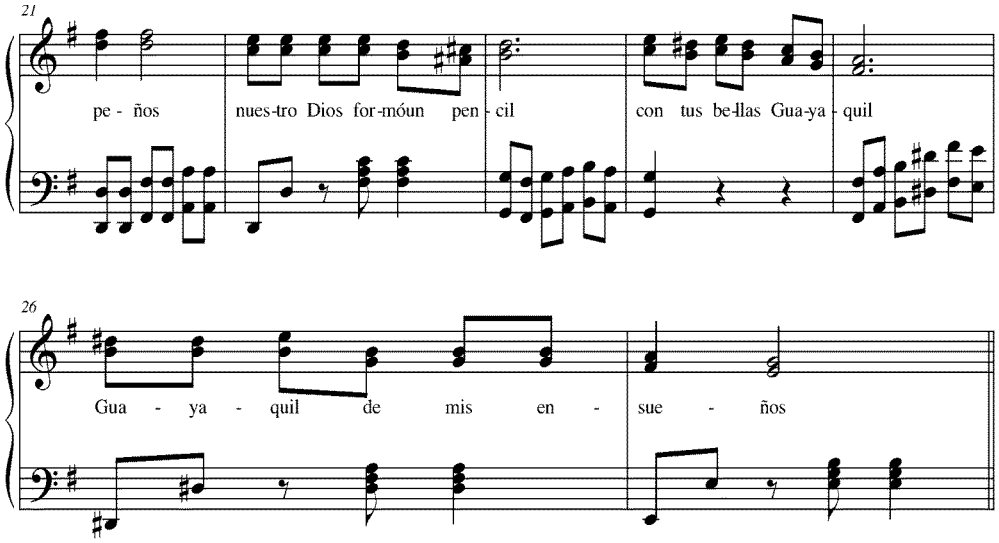
mandolin), *tiples* (a four-course, triple-string guitar), and *guitars.* In Ecuador, the *pasillo* is played by ensembles of guitar and *requinto.* Both types of *pasillos* are different not only in terms of sound, but also in terms of meaning. In Ecuador, the *pasillo* became an emblematic expression of the national identity, while in Colombia it was considered a national music genre of the Andean elites but of lesser importance than the *bambuco.*

Ecuadorian *pasillos* are classified as *pasillos costeños* (from the *Costa)* and *pasillos serranos* (from the *Sierra).* The difference between both types of *pasillos* resides in the sentimental and even tragic lyrics of the latter. The *pasillo* "Lamparilla" (Little Lamp), composed by Miguel Ángel Casares (1903-n/a) to a poem of Luz Elisa Borja, is a typical example of a *pasillo serrano.* The lyrics talk about the pleasure of "crying when the distressed soul cannot heal its profound pain" and regard tears as "oil that helps soften the rigor of the cruel destiny." This *pasillo* is usually performed in a very slow tempo emphasizing the tragic lyrics. As with most traditional *pasillos,* it was written in the minor mode, with a brief modulation to the major. Mexican *bel-canto* singer Margarita Cueto recorded "Lamparilla" for Columbia Records in the 1920s to the accompaniment of a string orchestra and in a very lively tempo, suggesting it was still danced to. In the mid-twentieth century, however, performers from the highland region started singing "Lamparilla" in a slow tempo and heart-felt manner.

The *pasillo* "Guayaquil de mis amores" (Guayaquil of My Loves) is an example of *pasillo costeño (pasillo* from the *Costa)*. It was composed by Nicasio Safadi, an Ecuadorian of Lebanese descent, to the lyrics of Lauro Dávila, a well-known middle-class poet from Guayaquil. The lyrics describe the beauty of the port city, and include metaphors highlighting its strategic position in the Gulf of Guayaquil and the beauty of its women (see lyrics on p. 105). Despite the minor mode, this *pasillo* is always sung in a lively tempo, reflecting, to certain degree, the happy spirit characteristic of *costeño* people. Its harmonic structure is more elaborate than that of the *pasillo serrano*, and its tonal plan includes modulations to the relative major and frequent use of secondary dominant harmonies. Guayaquileans used to dance to this piece in the 1930s and 1940s; however, this song today is only meant to be listened to. This *pasillo* has an active bass line, especially at the end of the verses. The introduction shows *sesquiáltera* rhythms in the melody, which when added to the interval of augmented second, gives this song a middle-eastern flavor. The use of double dominants in the harmony provides smooth modulations that enrich the arrangement. Listen to CD, Example No. 8.

“Guayaquil de mis amores”





Music Score 7. Source: *Álbum de la música ecuatoriana*. Sadram.

AUTHORS, COMPOSERS, AND PERFORMERS

To talk about *música nacional* is to talk about its authors, composers, and performers, whose names are frequently evoked in anthologies compiled by Ecuadorian music lovers. These are journalists, musicians, and lawyers who have been interested in recounting stories about the sources of inspiration and circumstances in which authors and composers wrote their poems and music. Because these stories have been told so many times, and in so many different ways, the most popular have acquired a life of their own.

Most anthologies include the song lyrics, as well as brief biographies and pictures of poets, composers, and performers. Some include the music scores.

Florilegio del pasillo ecuatoriano by Alberto Morlás Gutiérrez (1961) was the first anthology of this kind. It was followed by *Antología del pasillo ecuatoriano* by Isabel Carrión (n.d), *Florilegio de la música ecuatoriana* by Mario Godoy (n.d.), *Pasillos clásicos* by Pablo Díaz Marmolejo (1996), *Pasillos y pasilleros del Ecuador* by Guerrero Blum (2000), *Lo mejor del siglo XX* by Oswaldo Carrión (2002), and *Antología de la música ecuatoriana* by Ermel Aguirre González (n.d). In general, compilers present the same selection of *pasillos* and recycle the same biographies and anecdotes published in previous anthologies.

Journalists have often created an aura of mystery around particular songs, as happened with the famous *pasillo* "El alma en los labios," (The Soul in the Lips), whose lyrics were written by Medardo Ángel Silva, the best-known Ecuadorian modernist poet. In the 1970s, journalist Hugo Delgado Cepeda wrote a series of articles about Silva and the reasons for his early death. Delgado was interested in shedding light on whether Silva committed suicide or not, who the woman he desperately loved was, and how the poet spent his last minutes of life. Another frequently heard story in the anthology is related to the creation of "Vasija de barro" (Clay pot), to which I referred in the description of the *danzante.* This particular story has received great attention because it reinforces the idea of *música nacional* being a spontaneous and cultivated form of art associated with renowned artists, poets, and musicians (see p. 63).

Anthology compilers are also interested in investigating the origin of unusual *pasillo* names, especially those having no relation to the lyrics. This is the case of "El aguacate" (The Avocado), whose lyrics are basically a man's declaration of love.[15] Other stories focus on the personal lives of composers and performers, as is the case of the *pasillo* "Sendas distintas" (Distinct Paths). Jorge Araújo Chiriboga composed this song for his wife, the famous singer Carlota Jaramillo, who was more than twenty years his junior. The blindness of Miguel Ángel Casares, the author of "Lamparilla," is often recounted as a life irony because the lyrics allude to the eyes being the light guiding one's life path. Casares was twenty-one years old when he wrote the music and did not imagine that he would live his last years in complete blindness due to a cataract. All these stories are constantly repeated in the anthologies and passed on by word of mouth.

More than a lucrative activity, compilers devote their time, efforts, and money in what they consider is a "patriotic duty," i.e. to disseminate Ecuadorian music. Most importantly, they do it because they love the music itself and believe it deserves national and international recognition. They address the anthologies to people like themselves, who share their love for *música nacional*. Normally, they publish their works using their own funds and sell them at music and bookstores

[15] Some compilers assert the author was sitting behind an avocado tree while writing the lyrics and that an avocado fell and hit his head when he was deciding upon a title for the song. Others believe that the title alludes to a person who is "love sick" since the term "avocado" was used to describe such state of being.

without major profits. The social function of these anthologies is limited because of the small number of copies printed. Music teachers often buy the books because they have valuable information for the music class. Upper-middle class Ecuadorians who listen to this repertoire often talk about the composers' lives, and use these stories to show the value of their songs as expressions of lived experiences.

THE AUTHORS

With very few exceptions, such as Medardo Ángel Silva, *pasillo* authors were usually upper-middle-class poets, and most were educated in Europe, like Abel Romeo Castillo, Wenceslao Pareja, and Remigio Crespo. Others from less affluent circles, such as Lauro Dávila and César Maquilón, were intellectuals and members of elite social and literary circles. Later, composers started writing song lyrics in the dominant literary style of the period.

Abel Romeo Castillo (1904-1996) wrote the lyrics of "Romance de mi destino" (Romance of my destiny), one of the most popular *pasillos* in the *música nacional* corpus. He was born into a wealthy family that owned "El Telégrafo," Guayaquil's oldest newspaper, and "Quinta Piedad," its first radio station. He studied in the United States, Spain, and Chile, and was actively involved in Guayaquil's cultural life upon his return.

Lauro Dávila (1885-1968) lived in many places throughout Ecuador. He was born in the southern coastal province of El Oro, went to high school in Cuenca, a southern highland city known as "the cradle of poets," and got his teaching degree in Quito. At age twenty-four, he worked as a school teacher in Guayaquil. Seventy of his poems were set to music by Nicasio Safadi, Enrique Ibáñez Mora, and also by himself. "Guayaquil de mis amores" is the *pasillo* that immortalized his name and his poetry.

Wenceslao Pareja (1892-1947) was a medical doctor who worked on the eradication of the yellow fever in Guayaquil. Francisco Paredes Herrera set several of his poems to music. Foreign poems were also musicalized in *pasillos,* as is the case of "Sombras" by the Mexican poet Rosario Sansores (1889-1972), and "Rosario de besos" by Colombian poet Libardo Parra.

THE COMPOSERS

In contrast to the poets, *música nacional* composers were generally self-taught musicians from the middle-lower classes who earned a living as public school teachers. Among them, Francisco Paredes Herrera, Nicasio Safadi, Enrique Ibáñez Mora, and Carlos Rubira Infante stand out for their well-known and prolific musical production. They all were high-esteemed composers, songwriters, and performers.

Francisco Paredes Herrera (1891-1952), known as the "Prince of *pasillos"* for his more than 600 *pasillos,* was born in Cuenca but lived most of his life in Guayaquil. In the early 1920s, he worked for José Domingo Feraud Guzmán perforating pianola rolls. Unlike other composers of his time, Paredes Herrera had a formal musical education and wrote more elaborate musical arrangements. He was very strict with the setting of verse, paying attention to the accents of words so that they coincided with the melodic accents. He composed music in a variety of musical genres such as *pasodobles, pasacalles, fox trots, one steps, danzantes, yaravíes,* and *sanjuanitos.* Many of his pieces were recorded by Victor and Columbia Records and published abroad. Paredes'*pasillos* are known for their lyricism, melodic richness, and intimate character. The most famous include "El alma en los labios" (1919), "Rosario de besos" (1928), "Tú y yo" (1933), "Manabí" (1935), and "Como si fuera un niño" (n.d.).

Nicasio Safadi (1897-1968), known as "El Turco" (the Turkish) for his middle-eastern ancestry, came to Guayaquil at age five. Having a beautiful baritone voice, he used to sing the second voice in duets. In the early 1910s, he recorded *pasillos* for Columbia and Favorite Records with singers José Alberto Valdivieso (known as "El diablo ocioso," the Lazy Devil), José Villavicencio, and Sebastián Rosado. His most popular *pasillos* include "Invernal" and those dedicated to the port city of Guayaquil, such as "Guayaquil de mis amores"

(1930) and “Romance criollo de la niña guayaquileña” (Creole Romance for the Girl of Guayaquil).

Enrique Ibáñez Mora (1903-1998) was a self-taught composer from Guayaquil, who sang the lead voice in duets. Among his famous *pasillos* are “Adoración” (Adoration) and “Sí, pero calla” (Yes, but Be Quiet). Safadi and Ibáñez Mora formed the famous Dúo Ecuador, who traveled in 1930 to New York to record Ecuadorian music for Columbia Records. Both composers wrote a new repertoire of songs for this occasion. Safadi was given Ecuadorian citizenship beforehand to properly represent the country abroad.

Carlos Rubira Infante (b. 1921) is a prolific composer and songwriter from Guayaquil. He has written *pasillos* and *pasacalles* for almost every city in Ecuador, as evident in pieces such as “Guayaquileño” and “Ambato tierra de flores.” (Ambato Land of Flowers. In his youth he worked for the post office in Guayaquil, as well as for radio stations in Guayaquil and Ambato. In 1947, he recorded with Olimpo Cárdenas his *pasillo* “En las lejanías” (In the remotedness) on the first record ever produced in Ecuador. In addition, he performed in duets and trained numerous singers in the interpretation of *música nacional.* He has received numerous awards from the government and is regarded as a living national treasure.

Despite their social-class differences, both poets and musicians worked together and were part of the golden period of the *pasillo* (1920s-1950s), in which the most popular songs of the *música nacional* anthology were written. Setting the elites' poems to music not only legitimized the *pasillo* as the main national music expression, but also raised, albeit symbolically, the social status of musicians.

THE PERFORMERS

In Ecuador, *pasillos* were normally sung as duets to the accompaniment of a single guitar and in a much livelier tempo than they are performed today. The most popular duet performers in the 1910s were the Dúo Alvarado-Safadi, who were among the first musicians to make recordings in Ecuador. Siblings such as the Hermanas Mendoza-Sangurima, the Hermanos Montecel, the Hermanas Mendoza-Suasti, the Hermanas Ron, and the Hermanos Miño-Naranjo formed other duets. Dúo Benítez-Valencia, the Dúo Aguayo-Huayamabe, and the Dúo Saavedra-Rubira set high standards of *música nacional* performance.

With the influence of the Mexican trio Los Panchos, the *pasillo* adopted in the 1950s an instrumentation consisting of two guitars and a *requinto.* The most famous Ecuadorian trios at this time were Trío Los Brillantes and the Trío Los Reales, both of which had Argentinean female singers. Marco Tulio Hidrobo, the *requinto* player of Los Brillantes, left the ensemble to establish his own trio, Los

Reales, with his Argentinean wife as singer. These trios innovated *música nacional* performance with more elaborate guitar arrangements and an international singing style that was noticeably different from that of Ecuadorian singers. The upbeat tempo and the polished "low" voices of the Argentine singers gave *música nacional* a special character that was different from the Dúo Benítez-Valencia, who slowed down the tempo, or Hermanas Mendoza-Sangurima, whose voices sounded sort of "unpolished." The same ensemble of guitar, *requinto,* and female voice was notoriously different from previous ensembles. Hidrobo added new textures to *música nacional* with his *requinto* arrangements.

Influenced by the *canción romántica* of the 1960s, solo vocal performance became as popular as that of the trio, especially in interpretations by Julio Jaramillo (1935-1978) and Olimpo Cárdenas (1919-1991). Both singers developed a unique *pasillo* singing style with their warm, smooth, and melodious high-pitched voices. Julio Jaramillo was regarded as "El Ruiseñor de América" (the Nightingale of the Americas) for his mellow voice. Ecuadorians also hold Carlota Jaramillo (1904-1987) in high esteem for her her heart-felt interpretations. Considered the "Queen of the Pasillo," she has a special place in Ecuadorian music history, though the younger generations find her style old-fashioned, as my interviewees mentioned to me.

In Ecuador, *música nacional* performers are known as *artistas nacionales* (national artists). This term is given only to renowned performers of *música nacional,* who are known at the national level. A commentary frequently heard among them is that *artistas nacionales* do not just "sing," but "interpret" songs with deep feelings, which ostensibly makes the difference between an "artist" (art-ist), i.e. a person who makes "art," and a mere "singer" *(cantante)*. Another discourse points to the fact that they are singers who have made a name based on their voices and talent, rather than on a dance choreography or sensual outfits. Furthermore, they claim to sing *música nacional* for music's sake rather than for commercial interests.

Most *artistas nacionales* began their careers singing in contests for *aficionados* organized by radio and TV stations. "El Album Musical Ecuatoriano" and "La Corte Suprema del Arte" were two of the most popular radio programs that gave promising young artists performance opportunities. Julio Jaramillo, for example, worked hard to get an audition. Other singers such as the Hermanas Mendoza-Sangurima and Hermanas Mendoza-Suasti, "learned" how to interpret *música nacional* with famous composers. Radio stations in Quito provided musical accompaniment with their own orchestras and ensembles, like the *Orquesta Jácome* and the *Orquesta Granja* (Pro 1997: 99).

As with composers, performers were middle-low-class Ecuadorians who were making ends meet. To great extent, they contributed to pass the elites' hegemonic imagination of the nation to the middle-lower classes, thus making them believe *música nacional* was their music, i.e. people's music. On the other hand, they legitimized their roles as *artistas nacionales* by incorporating into the canon of singing *música nacional* songs. They had close contact with composers/songwriters, rather than with the upper-middle-class authors.

As seen, the notion of *música nacional* has been a mental construct articulated by the upper-middle classes in the 1930s-1950, which it has permeated and conditioned the way Ecuadorians view and express themselves through music. Indigenous and *mestizo* musical genres were incorporated to the *música nacional* anthology; however, of all genres, the *pasillo* became the most significant music and the symbol of "Ecuadorianness" through a process of nationalization, which I will explain in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE *PASILLO:* RISE AND DECLINE OF THE NATIONAL SONG

Like many middle-class children in Guayaquil, I grew up listening to *música nacional* in my house and at school. In my childhood, I used to listen to *pasillos* in serenades, on the radio, and on television shows. When I was in my first year of junior high school, I developed a special taste for the *pasillo* because my classmates and I used to sing them in our music class. Our teacher, who was a *música nacional* fan, played the piano well and accompanied us in the singing of hymns, anthems, and a fair number of *pasillos.* We were taught that the Ecuadorian anthem was the second most beautiful anthem in the world after "La Marselleise." None of us questioned who had made such ranking and we believed in the truth of this statement. We were also taught that the *pasillo* is the expression of the national soul. We learned to sing Guayaquil's official anthem but were told that the *pasillo* "Guayaquil de mis amores" was the popular hymn in Guayaquileans' hearts.

Several years later, when I lived in Quito in the early 1990s, and again in the early 2000s, I attended numerous social gatherings in which friends and co-

workers sang their favorite *pasillos, boleros,* and *baladas* to the accompaniment of a guitar. They knew the lyrics of numerous *pasillos* by heart. I also attended *música nacional* concerts and observed that people in the audience always requested performers to sing the same repertoire of *pasillos,* especially "El aguacate" and "Sendas distintas," and joined them in singing the lyrics. The concert atmosphere resembled that of a *peña folklórica* because of the close interaction of the artists with their audience.

The *pasillo* plays a central role in Ecuadorians' perception of their national identity, which is reflected in the different reactions this musical genre generates among people of different ages and social backgrounds, whether this is passion, indifference, or rejection. For the elder generations, for example, the *pasillo* reflects the gentle and cultured nature of Ecuadorians through its poetic lyrics and romantic music. Younger generations, however, regard these songs as old-fashioned, sad, and depressing. Are these people referring to the same musical genre, or are they talking about different styles of music representing the aesthetics of different social groups?

This chapter examines the process of nationalization of the *pasillo* and the attitudes of upper-middle-class Ecuadorians toward their national music. For these purposes, I have divided this chapter into three sections. The first examines different hypotheses about the origin of the *pasillo;* the second analyzes the

nationalization process in the 1920s–1930s; the third considers the reasons for its decline in the mid-1970s. To these ends, I examine the effects of the Liberal Revolution of 1895, the lyrical content of early and mid-twentieth-century *pasillos,* as well as the role of the national and international recording industries in raising the *pasillo* to the level of national symbol.

THE ORIGIN OF THE ECUADORIAN *PASILLO*

Discourses about the origin of a musical genre provide a forum for the study of identity politics and people's identification to particular ethnic or social groups. Writers and historians have been interested in finding connections between the *pasillo* and musical genres of either Ecuadorian or European origin. To explain their particular stance, they have formulated different hypotheses that draw attention to the lyrical content, the character of the music, or the etymology of the word *pasillo,* without taking into consideration the music itself. As a result, most hypotheses are subjective and only reflect the intellectual's inner desires to find the origin of the Ecuadorian nationality in either the Hispanic or indigenous roots of the *mestizo* nation. Most Ecuadorians have taken these hypotheses for granted because of the literary and academic prestige of the intellectuals formulating them, and also because they are frequently cited in *música nacional* anthologies.

From a Eurocentric perspective, historian Gabriel Cevallos García regards the *pasillo* as a local version of the German *lied*, while Humberto Toscano links its nostalgic character to the Portuguese *fado* (Guerrero 1996). The *pasillo's* link to the *lied* stems from the fact that both genres are essentially refined poetry set to music. They both share a melancholy character that is expressed in feelings of loss, nostalgia, and despair. However, the musical characteristics of the *pasillo* and the *fado* are quite distinctive. If nostalgia and despair are the elements that link the *pasillo* with the *fado,* then one could argue that the *pasillo* is also related to the *tango* and the blues because these genres also exhibit a strong dose of nostalgia. Thus, the association of the *pasillo* with the *lied* and the *fado* are tenuous and rely on very subjective assumptions.

Likewise, references to the *pasillo* in literary works by José de la Cuadra and Carlos Aguilar Vásquez suggest a common origin with the Basque *zortzico* and the French *passepied,* respectively. The *zortzico,* a folkloric dance based on a 5/8 meter, has no musical resemblance to the 3/4-meter *pasillo.* The link of the *pasillo* to the *passepied* derives from a translation of the French word *passepied,* which literally means "passing the feet." The common root of the words—*pasillo* and *passepied*—does not provide enough evidence to relate these genres to each other, especially because the latter was a baroque dance that disappeared in the nineteenth century. In addition, there is no evidence that the *passepied* was a

popular dance during the colonial period, when Ecuador was known as Real Audiencia de Quito.

For other scholars, the *pasillo* bears a relationship to the Spanish *bolero* and the Austrian waltz because they all share a common triple meter (ibid.). The peak of the Austrian waltz in the early 1800s, with the works of Johann Strauss, father and son, coincides with the emergence of the instrumental *pasillo* in the Viceroyalty of Nueva Granada. All these hypotheses suggesting a European origin for the *pasillo* reflect a desire to "whiten" this genre so that it points to a "Hispanic" *mestizo* nation.

With regard to claims advocating the indigenous roots of the *pasillo,* Ecuadorian musicologist Segundo Luis Moreno argues that there is a connection between the *pasillo* and the extinct *toro rabón,* a *creole* dance with a triple-meter rhythmic pattern similar to that of the *pasillo* (Moreno 1996: 71). Moreno provides only one musical transcription of a *toro rabón* in his important study *La Música en el Ecuador* (1996). It is questionable, however, whether this piece is an example of a musical genre, or simply the title of a popular song in the late eighteenth century. Besides Moreno's example, no other references of *toro rabón* that help us shed light on its connection to the *pasillo* have been found.

Writers Gerardo Falconí, Arturo Montesinos, and José María Vargas suggest that the *pasillo* was influenced by the *sanjuanito,* the *yaraví,* and the *pase*

del niño (pass of the child) respectively (Guerrero 1996). Although the *pasillo* was influenced by the melodic contours and typical cadences of the *yaraví* and the *sanjuanito* (Wong 1999), these hypotheses are debatable given the fact that the *pasillo's* rhythm is set in triple meter, while the *yaraví* and the *sanjuanito* are in duple meter. Finally, the ostensible association between the *pasillo* and the *pase del niño,* a duple-meter music sung during Christmas holidays, is based on the similarity of the names—*pasillo* and *pase*—rather than on common musical traits.

Claims that associate the *pasillo* with an Ecuadorian musical genre reflect a desire to prove that the *pasillo* is decidedly "Ecuadorian" because its roots are derived from native musical practices. From a diffusionist point of view, one suggesting that musics have spread geographically from one region to another, most researchers agree that the *pasillo* came to Ecuador from Colombia and derives from the popular European waltz. According to journalist Hugo Delgado Cepeda, the *pasillo* was first heard in Ecuador in 1810, with the arrival of Batallón Numancia's military band from Colombia (Guerrero 1996). Ecuadorians were impressed with the new rhythm and roaring sounds of the wind instruments. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Ecuador belonged to the Viceroyalty of New Granada, which included present-day Colombia and Venezuela, during much of the colonial period. It is logical to assume that people from Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador shared the *pasillo,* though each country gave it a regional flavor.

Thus, the Colombian *pasillo* was influenced by the *bambuco,* the Venezuelan *pasillo* by the *joropo,* and the Ecuadorian *pasillo* by the *sanjuanito* and the *yaraví* (Portaccio 1994, vol. 2, 136).

The foreign origin of the Ecuadorian *pasillo* has been a topic of frequent discussion among the upper-middle classes. In 1997, I conducted a brief research study in Quito for my master's thesis, and found many interviewees apologetic about the *pasillo* not being an "authentic" Ecuadorian music. For Marcos Espinoza, manager of the Quito branch of Almacenes J. D. Feraud Guzmán, (one of the largest music stores in Ecuador), the *pasillo* is an "adopted rhythm," rather than an "Ecuadorian product."[16] The foreign origin of the *pasillo* is highlighted in the idiosyncratic name historian Jorge Núñez (1980) used to describe it: *"hijo bastardo de la independencia y hermano gemelo de la república"* (the bastard son of independence and the twin brother of the republic). The expression "bastard son" reflects its illegitimate, non-Ecuadorian origin, while "the twin brother of the republic" points to the close kinship with the Colombian *pasillo.*

The owner of a retail music store located in the Mariscal district of Quito contended that although the *pasillo* came from Colombia, it nevertheless reflects the true nature of 'Ecuadorianness' because its sentimental lyrics depict their ideas of being Ecuadorians. Unlike many upper-middle-class intellectuals who described the *pasillo* as "maudlin," "fatalistic," and "the product of boredom and

[16] Marcos Espinoza, personal communication.

frustration" (Pro 1997: 21), my informant did not regard the *pasillo* as sad, but rather as a poetic form that arises melancholy emotions.

The *pasillo* is also popular in Colombia, Panama, and Costa Rica; however, only in Ecuador did it become an enduring national symbol throughout the twentieth century. In Colombia, it was an important national music genre of the Andean region, but only second after the *bambuco* (Wade 2000). In Costa Rica, *marimba* renditions of *pasillos* are popular only in the region of Guanacaste, a province bordering Nicaragua. In Panama, the *pasillo* survives in art music renditions.

THE MAKING OF A NATIONAL SYMBOL

The nationalization of the *pasillo* in the 1920s and 1930s was the result of social, economic, political, and technological factors. The Liberal Revolution of 1895 brought about profound social transformations and a change of political power in a country previously ruled by conservative highland landowners. The coastal bourgeoisie became the new center of power and was expected to bring about the modernization of the nation-state through the expansion of the market economy and the integration of the country. Their economic and political power stemmed from banking, commercial development, and financial activities originated by the cacao boom. Indigenous and working-class people seeking the

abolition of labor exploitation in the *haciendas* joined the revolution with hopes for a better future.

The Liberal Revolution brought reforms that affected laws pertaining to civil marriage and divorce (1902), the Registro Civil (1900), and social welfare (Ayala 1994, Quintero 1991). Most importantly, the Liberal Revolution was instrumental in abolishing the monopoly of power by the Catholic Church[17] and establishing the secularization of education, an area in which the Church had its most extensive influence. The secularization of society and the interest in cultural expressions that reflect the aesthetics of the new dominant classes facilitated the arrival in the early 1900s of *Modernismo,* a literary movement that expressed a "personal lyrism" and "the longing for a genuine American artistic expression" (Handelsman 1981).

In Ecuador, *Modernismo* represented a counter-reaction to the epic and rhetorical literary styles characteristic in the second half of the nineteenth century. Modernist poetry was easy to set to music because of its simple structure and cadentious rhymes. In my view, it is unlikely that the *pasillo* could have emerged as a romantic love expression before the 1890s because the religious fervor and conservatism of the Ecuadorian society prevented the development of artistic expressions centered on worldly matters, such as the pleasures and bitterness of

[17] After the Concordato signed by president Gabriel García Moreno with the Vatican in 1869.

love. The fact that most music scores from the 1870s and 1880s were essentially salon music and military band music reinforces this view.

The new dominant classes sought to redefine their identity through cultural forms that reflected their class ideology. The *pasillo* was the only music from the cluster of Ecuadorian musical genres that was devoid of indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian musical associations. By stressing the Hispanic component of the *mestizo* nation through the use of poetry and melodies devoid of pentatonic flavor, the dominant classes adopted the *pasillo* as the music that best represented their class ideology and aesthetic values. In this selection, however, they excluded alternate modes of national representation.

Most Ecuadorians today believe that the *pasillo* has always been an upper-middle class romantic and nostalgic song. This genre, however, evolved stylistically from a low-class cultural form to the elites' poetic form. The stylistic changes were not just the product of random artistic choices but a reflection of a cultural hegemony imposed and naturalized from above. To understand this process, in the next section I will analyze the lyrics of various *pasillos* from the first half of the twentieth century and compare them to those of elites' *pasillos.*

THE EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY *PASILLO*

Little is known about the performance practice of vocal *pasillos* from the early twentieth century. The examination of songbooks of this period gives us an idea of their popularity and lyrical content but not of their social functions and contexts. They also include remarks about famous performers and composers, which show how popular this repertoire was in that period. Besides the contexts of the *retreta* and the serenade, there is scant information about *pasillo* performances in the private atmosphere, especially within lower-class spheres.

A close examination of *El Aviador Ecuatoriano,* a songbook from the early 1920s, reveals that the *pasillo* developed as a middle-lower-class expression before it became an elite national music. The lyrical content and language style of many songs are associated with images and jargons characteristic of lower class ambiences. Some utilize rude language to express a man's anger toward an unfaithful woman who has deceived him. These *pasillos,* known as *canciones de maldición* (songs of damnation),[18] were very popular in the early 1900s and are reminiscent of the stigmatized *boleros rocoleros* of the 1970s (see Chapter 4). The *pasillo* "A mi amor pasado" (To My Past Love) by Julio Flores, for example, describes the young woman to whom the song is intended as a "shameless whore" and "daughter of vice" who sells her body in "orgies."

[18] *Revista Estrellas*. 1969. Vol. 5, No. 65.

Bien te conozco impúdica ramera
Comprendo tu existencia miserable
Eres hija del vicio, eres artera
Y es tu ideal el pecado abominable.

Hiciste de tu cuerpo mercancías
Que cambiastes por oro a precios viles
Y bebiste del placer en las orgías
Cuando solo contabas quince abriles.

I know you well, shameless whore
I understand your miserable existence
You are the daughter of vice, you are cunning
And your ideal is abominable sin.

You made your body a commodity
That you exchanged for gold at high prices
And you drank of pleasure in the orgies
When you were only fifteen years old.

El Cancionero del Guayas, another songbook published in the mid-1910s, includes numerous *pasillos* whose lyrics and music are unknown today. "Juré vengarme" (I Swore to Take Revenge), makes reference to a man who wants to take revenge on a woman who has abandoned him. The second stanza says:

Juré vengarme de tanta felonía
Y te busqué para matarte iracundo
Y enardecido por el rencor profundo
Mil veces te maldigo en mi ironía."

I swore to take revenge of such perfidy,
And angered I looked for you to kill you,
And ignited in my profound rancor,
I damned you a thousand times in my irony.[19]

[19] *El Cancionero del Guayas*, 1918, No. 2, p. 4.

Other *pasillos,* like "Adiós" (Farewell), introduce the pathological idea of death as an immediate relief for the pains of love. The cemetery and the tomb are recurrent images of early vocal *pasillos,* from where mournful men claim their beloved women's attention.

Mañana cuando yo muera no me eches al olvido
Al ser que más te quiere no vayas a olvidar
Acuérdate un momento mujer de mis promesas
Llega a mi tumba helada un instante a llorar.

Tomorrow when I die do not forget me
The person who loves you most do not forget
Remember for a moment my promises, woman
Come to my frozen tomb to cry for a while.[20]

El Aviador also reveals what seems to have been a common practice during this period, namely, the paraphrasing of popular *pasillos.* The authors wrote the initials of the woman's name to whom the *pasillo* was dedicated next to the song title. "Te perdono" (I Forgive You), for instance, paraphrases the verses of one of the most popular *pasillos,* "El alma en los labios" (The Soul on the Lips). There is even a written indication in the songster that the lyrics should be sung to the music of the famous *pasillo* composed by Francisco Paredes Herrera. Interestingly, rather than a declaration of love, the lyrics make public the complaints of a man who has been cheated on by his woman. The song title below

[20] *El Cancionero del Guayas*, 1918, No. 2, p. 13.

shows the text as it appears in the songster. The song is dedicated to a spiritual lady *(espiritual damita)*[21] whose name is hidden under the initials H. I. G. F.[22]

Te perdono **(I Forgive You)**
Dedicated to the spiritual lady H.I.G.F.
Written to music of the famous *pasillo* "The Soul on the Lips"
Cuando tú ya te canses de vivirme engañando
y contemples con horror tus mentidas palabras.
Verás qué mal te has hecho con haberme engañado
al hombre que te amaba con todo el corazón.
Por qué es que tú te obstinas en seguirme engañando
por qué es que no te enmiendas en tu capricho de arte?
Comprende que te amo encanto de mi vida
y siempre te recuerdo en mis noches de insomnio…

When you get tired of always deceiving me
And contemplate with horror your lying words
You will see the wrong you've done yourself by deceiving me
The man who loved you with all his heart.

Why do you persist in deceiving me
Why don't you mend your capricious ways?
Understand that I love you, enchantment of my life
And I always remember you in my sleepless nights.

Obviously, the types of *pasillos* mentioned above did not enter the *música nacional* anthology because of their vulgar and pessimistic lyrics. In spite of their immense popularity in the 1910s, as their inclusion in the widely-spread songbooks demonstrates, these *pasillos* were forgotten because they were not representative of the elites' aesthetic values. According to Ana Ochoa, when

[21] "Espiritual damita" is an expression often used in the press to refer to a young lady.
[22] *El Aviador Ecuatoriano*. Año 1922. Tomo No. 2. No. 1.

musical genres are transformed into national symbols, they often undergo stylistic changes to eliminate musical features pointing to ethnic, gender, or regional differences within the nation. The genres are "cleansed" so that one particular version becomes the "official" national music representing the aesthetics of the dominant classes (Ochoa 2003: 87). In the process of nationalization, hundreds of *pasillos* were "sacrificed" and forgotten, while a few dozen were "sacralized" (Granda 2004: 93).

THE *PASILLO* IN THE 1920s–1950s

During the 1920s, upper-middle-class intellectuals appropriated and transformed the "songs of damnation" into "classy" songs. The new lyrics were written in modernist poetry and expressed national pride for the country and an exacerbated idealization of women. In Ecuador, *Modernismo* found its best exponents in the "Generación Decapitada" (Beheaded Generation), whose poets—Medardo Ángel Silva, Arturo Borja, Ernesto Noboa, and Humberto Fierro—ended their lives in early adulthood. Other modernist poets, like José María Egas and Pablo Hanníbal Vela, gave their poetry a more optimist and romantic tone. Affluent and middle-class intellectuals, like Abel Romeo Castillo, Lauro Dávila, and César Maquilón followed the modernist trend and wrote the lyrics of some of the most popular *pasillos* today. Concurrently, popular composers like Nicasio Safadi and Enrique Ibáñez Mora started writing their own

texts in the already-established *pasillo* tradition, portraying elites as cultured, sensitive, and refined people.

Pasillo composers were often invited to social and literary gatherings in upper-middle-class homes. Late in his life, César Maquilón recalled that in his youth, he and other musicians and writers used to meet at the home of Isabel Estrada de Ramírez, a lady of reputable family lineage and patroness of the arts. At these gatherings, people entertained themselves by reading poems and performing songs composed by the same group members. Maquilón remarked that Doña Isabel frequently advised them to read French poetry for literary inspiration.[23] Francisco Paredes Herrera and Nicasio Safadi, two of the best-known and most prolific composers, were also members of this intellectual circle.

According to Maquilón, he and Safadi changed the lyrics and arrangement of a popular song entitled "Isabel." This *pasillo* was a prototype of the "songs of damnation" of the early twentieth century, corroborating my argument that the roots of the early vocal *pasillo* were lower class. Maquilón stated that instead of saying "Maldita tu trampa, vagabunda" (Damn your tricks, vagabond woman), he would employ other expressions to depict the man's anger. He affirmed: "I have never written out of hate or resentment. I have always sung about tenderness, emotion, sweetness, and true love."[24] The lyrics he wrote to replace the original

[23] *Revista Estrellas*. Vol. 5, No. 65.
[24] *Idem*.

text idealized the woman and only indirectly referred to the pains of love. On the other hand, Safadi's arrangement transformed this *pasillo* into a "classy" song. In order to enrich its harmonic structure, he used a walking bass line and secondary dominants to the IV and V grades. Unable to find the original verses of the *pasillo* "Isabel," I include one of the strophes Maquilón wrote for this song, entitled "La divina canción" (The Divine Song).

Al pie de tu reja te canto adorada,
la dulce y sentida canción del dolor;
Despierta, te ruego, mi nunca olvidada,
Despierta y escucha, mujer tan amada,
Mi canto de amor.
At the bottom of your balcony I sing to you, my love,
The sweet and heartfelt song of pain;
Wake up, I beg you, my never-forgotten darling,
Wake up and listen, beloved woman,
To my chant of love.

"Invernal" (Winter Time), a poem written in 1920 by poet laureat José María Egas, (1896-1982) and musicalized by Safadi, is an example of the type of *pasillo* that was raised to the level of national symbol. The consonance and rhymes of the lyrics make this poem suitable to be set to music. The verses are imbedded with nostalgic air and flowing rhymes, which sing about the illusion of love and being loved. Listen to CD, Example No. 8.

"Invernal"
Ingenuamente pones en tu balcón florido
la nota más romántica de esta tarde de lluvia
voy a hilar mi nostalgia, del sol que se ha dormido
en la seda fragante de tu melena rubia.

Hay un libro de versos en tus manos de luna
en el libro un poema que se deshoja en rosas
tiendes la vista al cielo y en tus ojos hay una
devoción infinita para mirar las cosas.

Tiembla en tus labios rojos la emoción de un poema
Yo, cual viejo neurótico, seguiré con mi tema
En esta tarde enferma de cansancio y de lluvia.
Innocently in your flowery balcony you offer
the most romantic note on this rainy afternoon
I will spin my nostalgia from the sun that has gone to sleep
in the fragrant silk of your long blond hair.

There is a book of verses in your moon-like hands
in the book a poem that is being stripped into rose petals
you turn your gaze toward the sky and in your eyes there is
an infinite devotion to look at things.
The emotion of a poem trembles in your red lips
I, like an old neurotic, will continue with my theme
On this afternoon that is sick with weariness and rain.

Other *pasillo* lyrics express affection for Ecuador's countryside and praise the beauty and bravery of its people, characteristics typically present in all musical genres raised to national symbols. "Guayaquil de mis amores" (Guayaquil of My Love) depicts the port city as "a pearl emerging from the sea," which becomes "a garden blessed by God," and whose women are "loving and beautiful." Listen to CD, Example No. 9.

"Guayaquil de mis amores"
Tú eres perla que surgiste del más grande e ignoto mar
y que al son de tu arrullar en jardín te convertiste,
soberano en tus empeños nuestro Dios formó un pensil
con tus bellas, Guayaquil, Guayaquil de mis ensueños.

Si a tus rubias y morenas que enloquecen de pasión,
les palpita un corazón que mitiga negras penas
con sus ojos verdes mares o de negro anochecer
siempre imponen su querer, Guayaquil de mis cantares.

You are the pearl that emerged from the greatest and most unknown sea
And in the sound of your lullaby you became a garden
Steadfast in your efforts our God made a painting
With your beautiful women, Guayaquil, Guayaquil of my dreams.

For the passions of your blonds and brunettes
Their hearts beat in them and soften awful pains
With your sea-green or night-black eyes
They always impose their love, Guayaquil of my songs.

Overall, it was this type of *pasillo* dedicated to cities, their people, and an idealized woman, that best reflected the elites' class ideology. Gradually, the "songs of damnation" disappeared and only those fulfilling the elites' aesthetics survived. The *pasillos* with allusions to death and the cemetery also vanished from the songbooks as well as the practice of paraphrasing popular *pasillos.*

FEMALE FIGURES IN THE *PASILLO*

The *pasillo* repertoire displays a series of ambivalent images and sentiments toward women. They were either the subjects of idealization or revenge. Early twentieth-century *pasillos* often portrayed women as unfaithful, while *pasillos* from the 1930s portrayed women as metaphors for the nation. A few *pasillos* from the 1940s, like "Esposa" (Wife) by Carlos Rubira Infante, idealize the woman in her role as wife and express the author's desire to make her happy during his lifetime. Other*s*, however, give continuity to pessimist feelings, such as "Encargo que no se cumple" (Assignment That Cannot Be Fulfilled) by Marco Tulio Hidrobo, which expresses an exacerbated motherly love. In this song, a man cries at his mother's tomb because he has not been able to carry out the last promise he made to his mother, which was not to cry when he visit her tomb.

The *pasillo* "Disección" (Dissection) by Víctor Valencia is an example of a pathological expression of love. The author dreams he is dead in the morgue. The forensic doctors dissect his body to find out the reasons for his death. When they open his cranium they see that his last thoughts were devoted to her. When they raise his eyelid, they see the woman's face reflected in his pupils. When they dissect his heart, they find a hole because the woman had stolen it when he was alive. Finally, when the doctors check his veins, they found them empty because he had used blood to write his pains of love.

It is worth noting that although women have frequently been alluded to in the *pasillo* lyrics, they have had no active voice in song composition. Women's poems were occasionally set to music; however, men were normally the authors of the most popular *pasillos.* Women's lyrics also expressed a sense of loss and nostalgia for her beloved, albeit in a more idealized and romantic manner. In the *pasillo* "Sombras" (*Shadows*) by Mexican poet Rosario Sansores, for example, the author recalls the romantic moments and the hugs she received during the happy days of the relationship.

Interestingly, there are no *pasillos* composed by women in the *música nacional* anthology, which suggests the idea that women's roles in popular music were circumscribed exclusively to the realm of performance. Upper-middle-class women did compose music, as music scores of *valses* and *pasodobles* from the early twentieth century demonstrate. However, this music was basically the type of salon music performed in elite social gatherings, rather than a popular musical expression.

The lyrics of traditional *pasillos* avoid expressions alluding to a woman's body and sexuality. Literary critic Natasha Salguero argues that the woman portrayed in *pasillo* lyrics is loved not for her body but for the tender feelings she inspires. The verses of the famous *pasillo* "Como si fuera un niño" (As If I Were a Child) shows the avoidance of woman's sexuality: "Yo no amo en tí la carne,

amo en tí el sentimiento" (What I love about you is not your flesh, but your feelings). In a literary exercise, Salguero puts together verses and metaphors of famous *pasillos* to describe the "intangible" body of the idealized woman:

> The beloved woman is invisible from the waist down; she has a blurred face, green eyes or occasionally black, blond hair, and an ability to listen, but she does not have ears. The man is welcomed into the woman's arms as if he were a child, he is cherished and consoled in his crying by silky or moon-colored hands, he is kissed with a rosary of kisses by a mouth from whose bright red lips trembles a poem, and he is looked at with eyes that are sometimes tempting, sometimes lethal, and sometimes devoted (Salguero 1995: 75).

The "cleansing" of early *pasillo* lyrics, i.e. the songs of damnation lyrics, involved the erasure of women's corporality and her "purification" as a spiritual being often compared to the mother's figure. Upper-middle class poets shaped the image of the nation according to this intangible and unattainable female figure. She is not an object of revenge or despair, but a sublime and unreachable being. Unlike early *pasillo* lyrics where men accused women for their misery and despair, in the traditional *pasillo* men are the cause of the breakup for their inability to make the woman happy. The woman abandons him not because she is unfaithful but because he does not deserve her. Similar lyrical transformations were present in other popular songs of that period, such as the *tango* and the *bolero,* suggesting the idea that this was an international music trend.

THE MASS MEDIA

Technological inventions in the early twentieth century were instrumental in making the *pasillo* "the national music genre *par excellence.*" The dissemination of the *pasillo* at the national level was facilitated by radio stations and phonogram recordings made by Columbia and Victor Records in the first decade of the twentieth century. In search of new music markets, these international companies began recording the music of several countries with hopes to attract new customers. What began as a business strategy to conquer the local music market was conceived by Ecuadorians as international praise for the *pasillo.* This is observed, for example, in an advertisement in *Diario El Universo* of Guayaquil, which notifies the public that "Columbia records will disseminate Ecuadorian music *to the world* by radio" [my emphasis], as well as in several announcements indicating that news of the radio program has been published in all magazines and newspapers from New York (Feraud Guzmán 1976). See Figure 4.

Figure 4. Advertisement. Source: *Almacenes José Domingo Feraud Guzmán,* 1916–1976.

Studio orchestras in Italy, Spain, and Germany recorded instrumental renditions of *pasillos* and other lively Ecuadorian songs. These recordings were primarily instrumental because sound technology had not yet developed to clearly record the human voice. Instrumental *pasillos* were played differently depending on the place where they were recorded. For example, *pasillos* recorded in Spain were accompanied by castanets and performed in a faster tempo than those recorded in Italy or in Ecuador in the early 1910s.

It was only in the mid-1910s that vocal *pasillos* began to be recorded in Havana and New York by Latin American *bel canto* artists such as Margarita Cueto, José Mojica, and Carlos Mejía from Mexico (Pro 1997: 48). Concurrently, Ecuadorian music began to be recorded by singers and military bands in Quito and Guayaquil. In 1911, Antenor Encalada, a music entrepreneur from Loja, hired a sound engineer from the German phonogram company Favorite-Record Akt-Gest. Although these recordings were made in Ecuador, the records were manufactured abroad.[25] From a total of 272 pieces recorded, there were: 67 *pasillos,* 47 *valses,* 43 *canciones,* 17 marches, 13 polkas, 12 *pasodobles,* 10 *habaneras,* and fewer numbers of other genres, such as *chilenas, boleros,* and *bambucos* (Pro 1996, 74-83). Approximately twenty-five percent of the pieces were *pasillos,* and of these, the majority were vocal *pasillos* sung by soloists and duos with one-guitar accompaniment. Military bands performed only a few pieces. These statistics suggest that the *pasillo* was by then the most popular music in Ecuador. It is worth noting that, with the exception of two *yaravíes,* no *mestizo* or indigenous genres were recorded in this first Ecuadorian record production.

The choice of the *pasillo* as the representative Ecuadorian music by the international record companies raises questions concerning agency in the musical construction of a national identity. How has the musical construction of

[25] Recordings of Ecuadorian music were manufactured in Linden.

"Ecuadorianness" been negotiated from abroad and within the country? Did Victor and Columbia select the *pasillo* among all Ecuadorian musical genres because of its local popularity or was their choice based on parameters that had no relation to local preferences, as in the international promotion of sentimental songs such as the *tango* and the *blues* in the early twentieth century?

A frequent discourse among Ecuadorian scholars states that the dominant classes were not hegemonic because they were unable to articulate a national culture that reinforced their leadership position and materialize their class ideology (Silva 1981: 257). A close examination of *pasillo* history, however, demonstrates that the elites did impose their cultural hegemony with the *pasillo* by transforming its lyrics and music arrangements from a lower-class expression to a highly poetic love song. Critic Augusto Cuevas rightly points out the fact that "the dominant classes popularized the most unpopular lyrics" in the sense that the words employed in *pasillo* lyrics are seldom spoken in everyday life. In other words, Ecuadorians from different social classes and educational backgrounds have adopted a national song whose vocabulary is largely unfamiliar to them but, nevertheless, they have made it their own. In fact, more than once I have had to look up words in a Spanish dictionary in order to determine their meaning.

In the 1920s and 1930s, several social and cultural movements—Socialism, *Indigenismo,* Social Realism, and aristocratic expressions in the arts—

emerged and coexisted with each other (Ibarra: 1998). Interestingly, it is in this period when many *pasillos* of the *música nacional* anthology were composed: "El alma en los labios" (The Soul on the Lips, 1919), "Lamparilla" (Little Lamp, 1923), "Guayaquil de mis amores" (Guayaquil of My Love, 1930), and "Sendas distintas" (Distinctive Paths, 1936). In my view, while leftist artists and writers were denouncing the exploitation of the subaltern populations through expressionist paintings and literary works that brought their histories of oppression to the public attention, the elites were simultaneously using the *pasillo* to spread their cultural hegemony through a musical expression that was as influential as was *Indigenismo* in the 1930s. Although different, the message put forward in the paintings and literary works stood no chance of contradicting or counterbalancing the message in the *pasillos* because relatively few people were exposed to the former art forms, whereas a vast majority of Ecuadorians, regardless of social class, listened to *pasillos* on the radio and in the streets.

A "HEROIC FEAT"

The year 1930 is significant in the history of Ecuador's popular music because it was the first time that "Ecuadorian artists" recorded "Ecuadorian music" beyond Ecuadorian borders. This "heroic feat," as it was referred to in the newspapers, was the idea of José Domingo Feraud Guzmán, who took Dúo

Ecuador to New York to record a series of Ecuadorian songs for Columbia Records. Dúo Ecuador was made up of Nicasio Safadi and Enrique Ibáñez Mora, two well known and prolific *música nacional* composers and performers. They prepared a repertoire of thirty-eight songs in different musical genres, most of which were specifically composed for the trip.[26] Despite the variety of genres released by Columbia Records, which included *jotas, one-steps, valses, cuecas, pasodobles,* the 1930 achievement was centered around the release of the *pasillo* "Guayaquil de mis amores." This song became a popular hymn with which all people from Guayaquil identified. In his elder years, Dávila described this *pasillo* as "a hymn, a romance, a ballad, and a lullaby," images that synthesize what most Guayaquileans see today in this song, considered Guayaquil's popular anthem.

The recordings of Dúo Ecuador became hits as soon as the records arrived in Guayaquil. Loudspeakers were placed on the street outside Almacenes Feraud Guzmán so that the public could listen to the new releases. One advertisement in *Diario El Universo* announced that thirty thousand people (thirty percent of Guayaquil's population in that period), had gathered in the Plaza del Centenario (main square in downtown Guayaquil) to listen to the new songs. Another

[26] Among these, the *pasillo* "Guayaquil de mis Amores" (Guayaquil of My Love), the *one-step* "Yanquecita, vamos a bailar" (Little Yankee Girl, Let's Dance)," the *sanjuán* "Canelazo," the *fox trot* "Ojitos negros" (Little Black Eyes), the *jota* "Los tres gorriones" (The Three Swallows), the *valse* "Alma mejicana" (Mexican Soul), and the *cueca* "Frutas de amor" (Fruits of Love).

advertisement announced that one thousand eight records, an incredible amount in those years, were sold in only two and a half hours on the first day. See Figure 5.

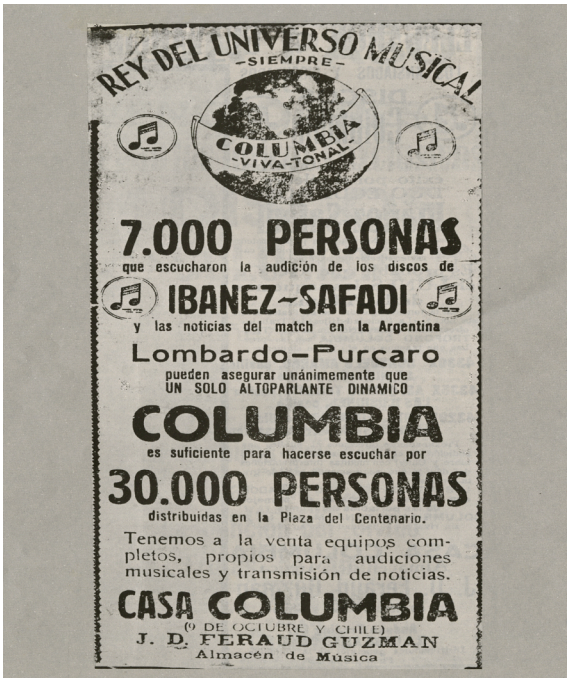


Figure 5. Advertisement in *El Universo*.
Source: *J. D. Feraud Guzmán*, 1916-1976.

A newspaper cartoon from the 1930s reveals the significance of these recordings for Ecuadorian people. Safadi and Ibáñez are drawn on a map of the Americas, with the skyscraper city of New York at their backs. They are throwing records to South America and the entire world. See Figure 6. Although little is known about whether their music was actually known in other Latin American countries or not, the perception of Ecuadorians regarding the "heroic feat" is of

great analytical interest here. The fact that this story is frequently recounted in newspaper articles as a highpoint in the history of Ecuadorian music is symptomatic of the nostalgia for those years.

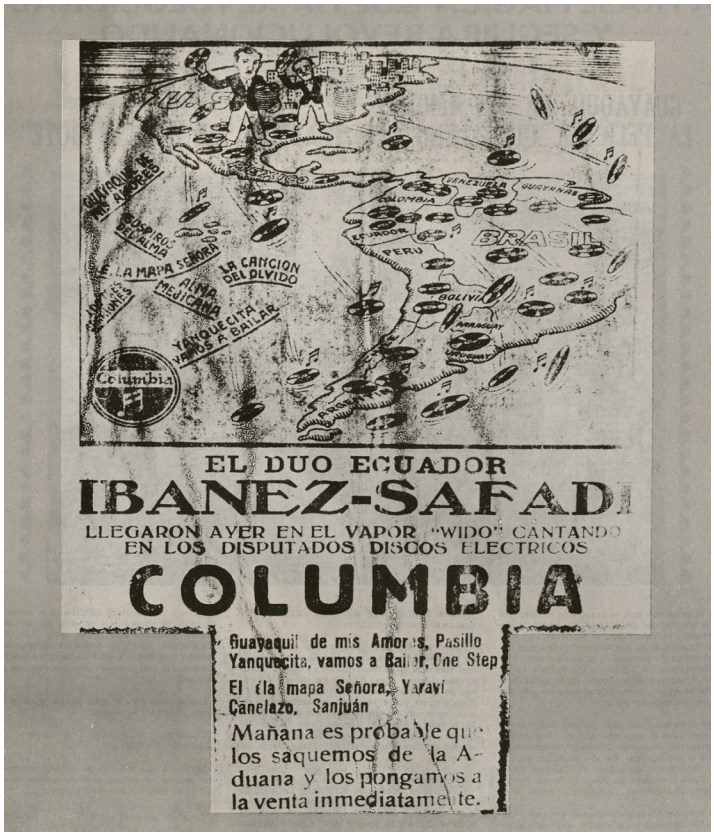


Figure 6. Cartoon of Dúo Ecuador in New York.
Source: Corporación Nacional de Música (CONMUSICA).

The *pasillo* "Guayaquil de mis amores" accompanied a silent movie of the same name, which was filmed for the triumphant return home of Dúo Ecuador. The film, also sponsored by Feraud Guzmán, was in essence a documentary about the people, landscapes, and architecture of Guayaquil disguised as a love story.

The movie showed typical urban scenes of Guayaquil, such as bullfights and soccer games, as well as scenes of elite people exiting elegant theaters in the downtown area. See Figure 7. The film was such a success that nearly all Guayaquileans watched it. A newspaper from Guayaquil noted: "seventy thousand people in Guayaquil have already watched it [the movie]; only thirty thousand are missing to say that all of Guayaquil has seen it" (Granda 2004: 132).

Figure 7. Source: Granda, Wilma. 1995. *Cine Silente en Ecuador*.

Early sound movies never became a vehicle for the popularization of the *pasillo,* as occurred with the *ranchera* and *tango* in Mexico and Argentina, respectively, which developed film industries early in the 1930s. In Mexico, first recordings of *mariachi* music elevated this regional expression of Jalisco to a national symbol of Mexico (Sheehy 2006). Carlos Gardel's performances of *tangos* in Argentine movies popularized this musical form at national and international levels. Like the gramophone, sound movies helped disseminate regional musics as prominent national forms. However, the *pasillo* did not follow this path, mainly because, unlike Mexico and Argentina, Ecuador did not develop a national film industry and lacked the infrastructure and economic resources to produce sound movies. In the 1930s, orchestras and pianists provided musical background to the scenes of silent movies. However, it is uncertain whether *pasillos* were played as sound background in films other than "Guayaquil de mis amores."

The song "Guayaquil de mis amores" not only put the name of Ecuador on the international music map, but promoted a sense of Ecuadorian identity associated with the *pasillo.* Subsequent *pasillos* dedicated to this port city by other composers reinforced this association: "Guayaquil, pórtico de oro" (Guayaquil, Golden Portal) by Carlos Rubira Infante, "Guayaquileña bonita" (Beautiful Woman from Guayaquil), and "La niña guayaquileña" (The Girl from

Guayaquil). *Pasillos* dedicated to other cities and provinces were written soon afterwards and they became symbols of regional or local pride. This is the case of "Alma Lojana" (Soul of Loja, ca. 1930) by Cristóbal Ojeda, and "Manabí" (1935) by Francisco Paredes Herrera.

Before the arrival of recording technology, *pasillos* were disseminated by military bands, which played in official acts and *retretas,* as well as through pianolas and sheet music. The radio, however, became a more effective and immediate outlet for large-scale dissemination. Whereas live performances of *pasillos* had previously been limited to small audiences, the radio was capable of reaching much larger groups. Its low cost made the listening of Ecuadorian music much more accessible and indiscriminate.

The radio arrived in Ecuador in the early 1930s and became a new means of socialization for family members and friends who gathered around it to listen to music. The first Ecuadorian radio station, "Radio El Prado," was founded in Riobamba in 1932, followed by "Radio Quinta Piedad" in Guayaquil (1933) and "Radio Quito" (1940). The latter had an important role in the promotion and dissemination of *música nacional.* It organized live music programs with professional artists and amateur singers, as well as composition contests of Ecuadorian music in order to stimulate the creation of new repertoires.[27] Radio Quito had its own orchestras—Orquesta Granja and Los Chagras—which

[27] *Radio Quito*. February 1,1943. Año 1, No. 1.

performed live music in daily transmissions. In the beginning, this radio station was on the air for about nine hours each day and included programs such as "Hora del aficionado" (Hour of the Amateur Singer). Many *artistas nacionales,* like Luis Alberto Valencia and Hermanas Mendoza-Suasti, began their singing careers at this radio station.

With radio and phonograph recordings, Ecuadorians were able to shape in their imagination what it meant musically to be Ecuadorian. The recording and dissemination of *pasillos* abroad created a sense of pride and gave Ecuador a name in the international venue vis-à-vis other kinds of popular music in the early twentieth century, like the *tango,* the *rumba,* and the *bolero.*

THE NATIONAL RECORDING INDUSTRY

The Ecuadorian recording industry was led by two prominent businessmen from Guayaquil whose lives and businesses are linked to the development of *música nacional.* Luis Pino Yerovi founded Ifesa (Industria Fonográfica Ecuatoriana S.A.) in 1946, and José Domingo Feraud Guzmán founded Fediscos in 1964. These two family-owned companies controlled production and distribution networks including recording studios, radio stations, magazines, outlet stores, and printing houses, which gave them total sway over the music market.

In 1916, José Domingo Feraud Guzmán opened his music store "Almacenes J. D. Feraud Guzmán" in the downtown area of Guayaquil, where he sold musical instruments, music scores, records, and pianolas. Feraud was a pioneer in introducing new sound technology in Ecuador. In the late 1910s, he sold the first pianolas and manufactured pianola rolls with *música nacional;* at first by hand, and after 1926, with the help of a machine, which allowed him to produce sixteen rolls per hour.[28] In 1925, he traveled to New York to purchase radio receivers for his clients in Guayaquil. Feraud was not only a businessman, but also an enthusiastic promoter of Ecuadorian music. As mentioned earlier, in 1930 he traveled to New York with the Dúo Ecuador to disseminate Ecuadorian music, an action he considered a "patriotic duty." Furthermore, he sponsored and gave recording opportunities to amateur singers who were beginning their artistic careers.

In 1936, Luis Pino Yerovi opened his music store "Emporio Musical," and ten years later he founded Ifesa, the first phonograph company in Ecuador. His close collaborators were Joe Magen, a sound engineer who became Ifesa's manager and technical director, and American musicologist John Riedel, who worked as Ifesa's artistic director in the 1950s. With the goal of promoting their records and artists, Ifesa published the magazine *Revista Estrellas* from 1964 to the mid-1980s. The magazine was very welcome because local newspapers did

[28] *Revista Estrellas* n/a.

not have a regular *farándula* section commenting on musical entertainment at the time. In the mid-1960s, *Revista Estrellas* devoted many articles to *música nacional* artists, composers, and authors.

The 1960s and 1970s were bonanza years for the national recording industry due to a policy implemented by the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL), which promoted the industrial development of Latin America through the economic model of import substitution. Both Ifesa and Fediscos were licensed to release records of international music in Ecuador since foreign-record imports were prohibited. As a result, the national economy was activated by the local production of phonograms, among many other goods. Consumers also benefited from the lower cost of international records made in Ecuador.

From 1952 to the early 1970s, *Cine Radial,* a popular magazine from Guayaquil, awarded the "Trofeo Huancavilca" to the most important figures of Ecuadorian cinema, radio, and television. "Huancavilca" was the name of an indigenous group from the coast that resisted the Incan invasion in the mid-1400s. This award became a symbol of artistic excellence and provided public recognition of the talent and professionalism of local musicians, especially those who interpreted *música nacional.* There were several award categories, such as best male or female singer of *música nacional* and *música moderna,* best television show, best radio station, and so on. The gala ceremony, organized every

year in Teatro 9 de Octubre, received full coverage in the media. Famous television shows with professional singers and *aficionados* (amateur singers) were "Canta Ecuador Canta" (Sing Ecuador, Sing) on Channel 4, and "Puerta a la Fama" (Doors to Fame) on Channel 10.

In 1957, Armando Romero Rodas founded Radio Cristal, a Guayaquil AM radio station known as "la radio del pueblo" (the people's radio). Besides providing everyday news, the radio station connected people who lived in the rural and urban areas. People sent important messages or birthday greetings through the radio in the hopes that their intended friends would receive it. The radio catered its music to a rural audience who enjoyed listening to popular *sanjuanitos* and *pasacalles* rather than to traditional *pasillos.* It also organized singing contests on a regular basis. With the intention of finding new female voices for Ecuadorian music, Radio Cristal organized the "Estrella Cristal" (The Star of Radio Cristal) contest every four years and was an outlet for *música nacional.*

Professional *música nacional* singers had numerous performance opportunities. They shared the stage with international artists in the Feria de Durán and the Feria de Caraguay. These *ferias* (trade fairs) took place in the surrounding areas of Guayaquil and were organized by the Chamber of Commerce and the Cattlemen's Association, respectively. People were interested

not only in seeing the products and services offered by the companies participating in the event, but also in attending the night shows with famous international singers, such as Raphael and Julio Iglesias, and dancers Iris Chacón and the Dolly Sisters. Although these *ferias* were organized once a year, they became an important venue for the promotion of Ecuadorian singers.

In the early 1960s, Ecuadorians were proud of their music and their artists. *Música nacional* competed with international songs for the top rankings in the billboards. In September of 1963, the *albazo* "Avecilla" (Little Bird), attributed to Nicasio Safadi, was in the third position, three positions before the famous Spanish singer Raphael. Ecuadorians were proud of *música nacional* when the Hermanos Miño-Naranjo won the first prize in the Second International Festival of the Ibero-American Song in Barcelona[29] in 1962 with the *pasillo Tú y yo* (You and I), composed by Francisco Paredes Herrera in the 1940s.

An active music industry developed around the production and consumption of *música nacional.* It was disseminated in records and music scores, and through radio and television programs. In 1969, Ifesa and Sadram Editora Musical released the series "Grandes Compositores Ecuatorianos" (Great Ecuadorian Composers), a collection of 33-rpm records with the most popular Ecuadorian music. In the 1970s, Fediscos released "Ecuatorianísima," a recording series that honored the best *música nacional* performers. Furthermore, Sadram

[29] *Revista Estrellas,* 1964.

and Fediscos published piano transcriptions of *música nacional.* Guitar players could find guitar arrangements in songbooks published by Fediscos and other music publishers. Tropical orchestras performed *pasacalles* and *albazos* at social dances to the delight of middle-class Ecuadorians. This was, indeed, the golden period of *música nacional.*

THE ECUADORIAN SENTIMENT: "WITH THE SOUL ON THE LIPS"

Any foreign citizen who lives in Ecuador for several years will find out that to sing with sentiment is an attribute highly valued in Ecuador. In his study of the *pasillo* discography, Alejandro Pro, a music collector of *pasillo* and *tango* records, argues: "Anybody can sing *baladas,* anybody can sing *boleros,* however, *pasillos are not sung, they are interpreted"* [my emphasis].[30] To emphasize his point, Pro quotes the words of Hernán Restrepo Duque, a well-known Colombian music researcher, who said to him: *"¿Qué tienen ustedes que envidiarle al tango, si con el pasillo—en sentimiento—le superan?"* (What do you [Ecuadorians] have to envy of the *tango,* if the *pasillo*—in sentiment—is superior?). Rather than examining the truth or falsity of Pro's statements, or comparing the similarities or differences between the *pasillo* and the *tango,* I am more interested in analyzing Ecuadorians' ideas about the uniqueness of the *pasillo.*

[30] *El Comercio*, February 23, 1992.

Ecuadorian singers also express similar opinions regarding the importance of singing with sentiments. In an interview, Juanita Burbano, a well-known *música rocolera* singer, recalled the words of a Peruvian friend who told her: "I have paid lessons to learn how to play *pasillos*…with the same sentiment expressed by an Ecuadorian musician, but I cannot play like them." Teresita Andrade, a *música nacional* singer associated with *música rocolera,* stated with great pride in an interview at her home in Newark, NJ: "Ecuadorians are fantastic at interpreting songs with sentiment!" Her husband explained her statement with the following commentary: "Colombians also have *pasillos,* but they are different…in singing their tropical music Colombians express another type of sentiment, one of happiness." Then, with even more pride than his wife, he said: "Our music makes people cry!" *(¡Lo nuestro hace llorar!).* I was not surprised with this pronouncement because I have heard this commentary a myriad of times since childhood, and again during my field research in Quito.

Ecuadorians' sad/happy nature is also reflected in the titles of early twentieth-century *pasillo*s such as "Reir llorando" (To Laugh by Crying) by Carlos Amable Ortiz. The first two verses of "Lamparilla", one of the most popular *pasillos* of the *música nacional* anthology, describes the "pleasure of crying" to alleviate one's pain of love.

Grato es llorar cuando afligida el alma
no encuentra alivio en su dolor profundo

It is pleasant to cry when the distressed soul
does not find relief from its profound pain.

When I asked my interviewees why they thought the *pasillo* was the symbol of the national identity, they often answered: "Because Ecuadorians are people who suffer," or "because the *pasillo* expresses the essence of Ecuadorians." I have always wondered why Ecuadorians have chosen a music that moves them to cry, or why they would stress "suffering" and "being sentimental" as salient attributes of their national identity, instead of a more optimist feeling.[31]

In his study of the Guayaquilean identity, Benavides argues that Medardo Ángel Silva crystallized a "structure of feeling" that gradually became a hegemonic social formation, expressed in praise for sentimentality. According to Benavides, this explains why Guayaquileans (and I would say Ecuadorians in general) are "able to publicly weep for their love, their lost youth, or, ultimately… an identity of loss… an identity based on the rejection of oneself and constituted by what one does not have or is not" (Benavides 2006: 6). Drawing on Gramsci's views of hegemony, Benavides argues, "Hegemony's power lies not only in its

[31] The *fado* and the *tango* express similar sentiments and are considered musical symbols of Portugal and Argentina, respectively. However, these images were imposed from abroad rather than raised by nationals. The lyrics of the *fado* deal with *saudade,* a Portuguese term that describes a feeling of longing for the past. This was an image created by Portuguese emigrants who missed their homeland. Argentineans began identifying their national identity with the stigmatized *tango* only after the great success of *tango* in France.

grand ideological manipulation but also in its subtle forms of articulation in the daily sentiments of a community's history" (Benavides 2004: 6-7). Benavides employs the notion of the "discipline of emotions" to help us understand why most Ecuadorians regard being sentimental as an essential feature of Ecuadorian identity. Musically, these sentiments of loss are expressed in a sobbing singing style that is often accompanied by a certain degree of dramatization, which makes listeners believe the singer has actually experienced the song lyrics in his/her own life.

In my view, the widespread idea that the *pasillo* is sad and sentimental music was invented in the second half of the twentieth century. The *pasillo* from the 1920s and 1930s cannot be considered a nostalgic song, as it is today perceived, for several reasons. First, it was the center of public attention due to the euphoria produced by the "heroic feat" achieved by Dúo Ecuador in New York, as well as by the hot sale of records. Second, the majority of authors and composers of *pasillos,* born at the turn of the twentieth century, were in their youth or early adulthood looking to the future or for opportunities in the present, rather than experiencing nostalgia for yesteryear. Third, the *pasillo* was a means of socialization in *retretas* and serenades, and it was a music danced to at social gatherings. Finally, the *música nacional* anthology was not yet established in the 1920s as many of the songs that conform it had yet to be composed.

The permanence of the *pasillo* as a symbol of "Ecuadorianness" throughout the twentieth century was due to the influence of the mass media and the invention of a *pasillo* tradition. The invention of tradition (Hobsbawm 1983) became an instrument of the dominant classes to impose their cultural canon. It is closely related to the concept of "authenticity," which is a value judgment generated and manipulated by the dominant classes to legitimate and distinguish their particular way of doing things. I often heard elder and middle-aged Ecuadorians saying that *pasillos* were "authentic" expressions of "Ecuadorianness" because different generations have been singing them ever since childhood. Tradition, however, "has little to do with the persistence of old forms, and more with the ways in which forms and values are linked together" (Erlmann 1991: 10).

ECUADORIAN STUDIES ON THE *PASILLO*

Ecuadorian scholars have studied the *pasillo* from different disciplinary perspectives. All of them emphasize loss, whether of one's political power, or of one's love or land, to describe Ecuadorians' identity. Agustín Cuevas regards the *pasillo* as an expression reflecting the loss of political power of the dominant classes.[32] According to him, "the 'Generación Decapitada' sang the eulogy of the

[32] Julio Pazos. "El pasillo no tolera la demagogia." *El Comercio,* July 11, 1993.

aristocratic class defeated by General Alfaro's riffraff [Liberal Revolution]... combining popular sorrows and the evasive torments of a feudal conscience [landowners' view of themselves]" (Cueva cited in Ayala 1983, 202-3).[33] In this statement, Cueva refers to the loss of economic and political power of the highland dominant classes in the aftermath of the Liberal Revolution. While his analysis of *pasillo* lyrics may explain the general feelings of the landowner class, as seen by one of its members, it does not explain why these types of lyrics were also popular among the popular classes before they were appropriated and "cleansed" by the upper-middle classes.

For historian Jorge Núñez, the *pasillo* is a *canción del desarraigo* (song of uprootedness) because its lyrics express the sadness of peasants and *mestizos* uprooted from their lands. In contrast, he regards the *pasacalle* as a *canción de arraigo* (song of rootedness) because its lyrics express pride and identification with a place of origin (Núñez 1982). Núñez coined the term *canción del desarraigo* in the late 1970s, when massive rural-to-urban migrations were at their peak. With this term he referred to a style of *pasillo* known as *música rocolera,* which also emerged in the 1970s as a working-class expression (see Chapter 4). Núñez's questionable thesis was echoed by other Ecuadorian scholars, who adopted the phrase to describe all styles of *pasillos.* Núñez did not realize that

[33] "La 'Generación Decapitada' canto la eulogia de la clase aristocrática vencida por las fuerzas del General Alfaro… mezclando las penas populares y los evasivos tormentos de una conciencia feudal."

pasillos of national pride, like "Guayaquil de mis amores," were not related to the theme of uprootedness. On the contrary, this *pasillo* has become an expression of pride and rootedness to the port city.

From a gendered perspective, Wilma Granda argues that the *pasillo* may be regarded as a liberating expression for men in a *machista* society such as Ecuador. She sees the *pasillo* as "an exercise for the expression of men's feelings,"[34] as men cannot normally express their "inner self" publicly. In a *machista* society, men are supposed to be strong, dominant, and self-sufficient. According to Granda, to sing *pasillos* about pains of love gives them the opportunity to express their vulnerable selves and emotions without losing face. I would agree with Granda's view of *machismo* as an important parameter helping us to understand why the *pasillo* became a prominent cultural form in maintaining the structure of gender relations in a *machista* society. However, her view does not explain why the *pasillo* is also appealing to women. As with previous scholars, Granda's analysis stems from a textual analysis that overlooks the reception of music as an important variable in the construction of meanings.

[34] Wilma Granda. "El pasillo, retrato del ecuatoriano." *El Comercio*, September 19, 1995.

THE DECLINE OF *MÚSICA NACIONAL*

If the 1960s was a period of splendor for *música nacional,* the 1970s was a period of decline. *Música nacional* lost commercial visibility with the invasion of new international musics such as the Colombian *cumbia, salsa, nueva canción, balada romántica,* rock, and disco. Middle-class Ecuadorians, who were the main supporters and consumers of *música nacional,* were awash in new musical options that pointed to modernity, happiness, romantic love, and social protest. In search of larger audiences, radio and television stations devoted more time to international music. Even *Revista Estrellas,* which had supported Ecuadorian singers since its first edition in 1964, began to feature more interviews with international artists than with Ecuadorian singers.

Government policies also contributed to the decline of *música nacional.* In 1971, President Velasco Ibarra imposed a substantial tax increase, from twenty percent to twenty-seven percent on public spectacles.[35] This tax reform replaced two previous taxes: a ten-percent tax for the reconstruction of Ambato after a catastrophic earthquake in 1949, and a ten-percent tax for funding public and cultural institutions. The increase of seven percent over the previous twenty percent tax affected *música nacional* entrepreneurs enormously because they were required to pay twenty-seven percent of the box office, regardless of the number of tickets that were actually sold. Unable to recuperate their investments, they

[35] *Revista Estrellas.* Año 8 (36). May 1976.

stopped organizing *música nacional* concerts, leaving Ecuadorian singers without job opportunities. Even the renowned gala for the delivery of "Trofeos Huancavilca," which normally took place in the Teatro 9 de Octubre, was moved to television in order to avoid the twenty-seven-percent tax payment.

The consequence of this tax reform brought about the gradual disappearance of *música nacional* concerts and *música nacional* artists from the music scene. Unable to secure performance opportunities, Ecuadorian singers looked for other types of jobs to sustain themselves. In 1976, *Revista Estrellas* published a series of articles analyzing the effects of the so-called "*maldito impuesto del veintisiete por ciento*" (damned twenty-seven percent tax), and declared 1975 a "dead year" for Ecuadorian music. Ironically, the implementation of the tax worked against the government's interests because it did not generate the incomes they expected. On the contrary, it reduced their income.

By the 1980s, the industry surrounding *música nacional* had almost disappeared. Without the support of music entrepreneurs and the mass media, Ecuadorian artists were unable to compete with international singers. Most importantly, there were few young artists interested in singing *música nacional,* and those who were new in the music business were associated with either *música rocolera* or Ecuadorian pop music, which had a larger audience. Ecuadorian pop singers usually opened the shows of international artists, which was a mandatory

law from the Ecuadorian Federation of National Artists. The twenty-seven percent tax was paid with the same money generated by the entrance tickets for the international artist's show. On the other hand, the entrance tickets and rental cost of *música rocolera* concert venues were relatively inexpensive, and given the large audiences attending the concerts, the organizers were easily able to pay the twenty-seven percent tax.

To ensure Ecuadorian artists had performance opportunities, the government created "La Ley Profesional de los Artistas" (The Professional Law of the Artists) in 1979. This law required that: 1) radio stations devote thirty percent of their music programs to *música nacional;* 2) television stations present two thirty-minute television spots with Ecuadorian artists every week; and 3) the national recording industry allocate thirty-three percent of their annual production to *música nacional*.[36] While the thirty percent of radio quota was fulfilled in the early morning hours when most people are still asleep, the other decrees have been poorly enforced. There is only one thirty-minute spot on national television every Saturday at noon devoted to Ecuadorian artists.

In the 1980s, Ifesa and Fediscos started recycling old 33-rpm and 45-rpm recordings of *música nacional* into cassette format and, since the 1990s, onto

[36] *El Comercio,* May 17, 1980. "Los profesionales nacionales tienen derecho al treinta minutos de programación musical de emisoras; 2 espacios de 30 minutos cada uno por semana y en forma alternada, en los canales de TV; el 33% del total de las grabaciones en las empresas discográficas, y a presentarse en los cines."

CDs. Because there were few young performers of *música nacional,* the youth of the 1990s listened to the same singers popular in the 1950s and 1960s, such as Hermanas Mendoza-Suasti and Hermanos Miño Naranjo. These artists, who have more than forty five years of artistic life, still perform in live concerts today and attract a vast audience of old and middle-aged people. As there has been little innovation in the performance of the *música nacional* repertoire, the younger generations regard it as *música nacional antigua* (old national music), in the sense of "old-fashioned."

CONCLUSION

The *pasillo* has been a powerful musical expression in articulating, maintaining, and contesting images of the Ecuadorian national identity. The *pasillo* exemplified the construction of a *mestizo* national ideology, which reflected the socio-cultural hegemony of the dominant classes. More than any other *música nacional* genre, the *pasillo* promoted an ideology of exclusion of the subaltern population. This was observed symbolically both in the lyrical content, which alluded to the life experiences of the dominant classes, and in the music itself, which was devoid of indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian musical traits.

At this point, it should be clear to the reader that the *pasillo* underwent several stylistic transformations in the twentieth century, which reflected the social, economic, and political transformations of different historical periods. The

pasillo changed from a people's music in the early twentieth century to a national middle-class *pasillo* in the 1930s to a working-class music in the 1970s (see Chapter 4). The *pasillo* from the 1930s pointed to the Hispanic root of the *mestizo* nation with its poetic language and elaborate musical arrangements, while the *pasillo* from the 1970s pointed to the indigenous roots through its colloquial language and performance contexts associated with the lower classes.

In general, Ecuadorians think of themselves as being sentimental people. This idea is so deeply ingrained in Ecuadorians that most people believe this to be a natural characteristic of Ecuadorians. Obviously, this idea has been culturally and historically shaped, and has become a *doxa* that is rarely contested because it has been taken for granted. The sentimental character of the *pasillo* is musically reflected in the slow tempos, prominence of the minor keys, and changes in the singing style. A careful listening of *pasillos* performed by renowned singers from the 1930s (Dúo Ecuador), 1950s (Dúo Benítez-Valencia), 1960s (Trío Los Brillantes), and 1970s (*rocolera* singers) will show how the sentimental interpretation of *pasillos* has changed in aesthetic terms.

In spite of media discourses regarding the "disappearance" of *música nacional* in the last decades of the twentieth century, this music, in fact, has great popularity among older generations and middle-aged adults, who fill concert halls to listen to their favorite songs. The *pasillo* has become an expression of the older

generations and music with which younger generations identify when they enter adulthood, or when they live abroad and feel nostalgia for their homeland (see Chapter 7).

CHAPTER 4

LA MÚSICA ROCOLERA: THE NEW URBAN SOUND OF THE 1970S

The 1970s was a period of profound social, economic, and political transformation in Ecuador. A military dictatorship came to power in 1972 and moved the country towards modernization. The discovery of petroleum in the Amazon region in 1972 changed the country's economic structure, which had been based on an agro-export economic model. Ecuador's new wealth was reflected in the development of national industries, the proliferation of private banks, and the construction of public roads connecting its various regions. This was most evident in the growth of the main urban centers. Quito changed markedly with the construction of modern buildings on Amazonas Avenue that contrasted noticeably with the old neocolonial houses built in the same area. Likewise, growth in the capital city expanded rapidly to the north and south with a national housing program for middle-class families implemented by the military government. The processes of modernization, industrialization, and urbanization generated hopes for a better future and a wealth of employment opportunities in the public sector. To finance this modernization process, the Ecuadorian government borrowed international loans, using the country's petroleum assets to

guarantee the loans. Paradoxically, by the early 1980s there was a general stagnation of the national economy due to the government's poor management, which resulted in an increase in foreign debt.

Social changes were also evident in Ecuador at this time. The Agrarian Reform, signed in 1964, distributed the lands of the large *haciendas* to the original owners, i.e. the indigenous peasants. This measure fostered a massive rural-to-urban migration of indigenous peasants who lacked the means to work the land productively. Migration brought about the emergence of new subaltern populations in the cities, who settled not only as seasonal workers, as in previous years, but as permanent dwellers settling with their entire families. Most migrants worked in the construction sectors, domestic services, and transportation. Those unable to find jobs earned their livings as street vendors, shoe shiners, or lottery-ticket sellers. This rural face of Quito contrasted greatly with the modern image represented by the numerous bank buildings constructed on Amazonas Avenue.

During this time of transformation, two styles of music associated with lower-class Ecuadorians emerged: *música chicha* and *música rocolera.* Both music styles expressed the new urban sensitivity of people who felt socially and culturally alienated in the city. While *música rocolera* was linked to feelings of despair and the betrayal of the working class population, *música chicha* was associated with the happy, danceable music of indigenous peasants. Despite their

parallel emergence, *música rocolera* and *música chicha* flourished independently from each other, fulfilling different, but at the same time, complementary functions. While *música rocolera* was meant for listening; *música chicha* was meant for dancing.

This chapter examines the emergence and development of *música rocolera* as a style of music representing the aesthetics of the new urban lower classes in the aftermath of the modernization of the country in the 1970s. Ecuadorian scholars have examined *música rocolera* from a top-down perspective, seldom taking into account the voices of the urban poor, who are ultimately the producers and consumers of this music. These studies have reiterated the views of upper-middle-class Ecuadorians toward a working-class population stigmatized as "drunkard" and vulgar. My goal in this chapter is to bring attention to the voices of composers, singers, and fans who have shaped the sound and images of *música rocolera* in order to understand its meanings. To this end, I examine various discourses about its origin and artistic values. I distinguish three stages of development, each of which is represented by a group of singers who have become signifiers of this repertoire. It is my contention that the urban lower classes manifest their feelings for the nation through references of abandonment and a woman's betrayal, which reflect to a certain extent the way

they view themselves in society, i.e. as people abandoned and betrayed by a government unable to provide for their basic needs.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND AND CHARACTERISTICS

Música rocolera is a term widely used in Ecuador to refer to a stigmatized style of music associated with the urban lower classes and *cantina* (low-class bar) environment. Basically, *música rocolera* is an umbrella term that encompasses a repertoire of songs in three specific musical genres: *bolero, valse,* and *pasillo.* Using colloquial language, the lyrics deal with negative aspects of the *relación de pareja* (couple relationships) such as despair, betrayal, love triangles, and breakups. Most lyrics depict women in a derogatory fashion, using terms such as *mala hembra* or *mujer bolera* as synonyms for "bad woman."

Música rocolera needs to be examined within the broader Latin American context, taking into account the development of similar types of working-class music, such as *música carrilera* in Colombia, *música de amargue* in the Dominican Republic, *música cebollera* in Peru, and *música vellonera* in Puerto Rico, all of which are in essence *bolero*-like musics with acoustic guitar accompaniment. The study of *música rocolera* helps us understand social processes of urban adaptation on the part of subaltern populations in Ecuador and elsewhere. Furthermore, it informs us how musical styles are shaped by singers and audiences through the blending of local and foreign performance practices.

Unlike the duet singing and acoustic guitar accompaniment characteristic of traditional *música nacional, música rocolera* performers sing to the accompaniment of a guitar ensemble that includes synthesizers and percussion instruments. *Boleros* are played with a drum set and *maracas,* which reproduce the typical *bolero* rhythmic pattern in 4/4 meter. In contrast, *valses* and *pasillos* do not generally include percussion. The use of synthesizers with high-pitched accordion-like timbres gives *música rocolera* a distinctive Ecuadorian sound reminiscent of musical arrangements of *yaravíes* and *sanjuanitos.*

Música rocolera has no relation to rock music. The name derives from the *rocola,* the Ecuadorian word for jukebox. Known in other Latin American countries as *vellonera, sinfonola, vitrola,* and *wurlitzer,* the *rocola* popularized the 45-rpm record in Ecuador with a variety of national and international musics, such as *boleros, tangos,* jazz, rock 'n roll, and *pasillos.* The *rocola* was introduced to Ecuador in the 1950s and was found in middle-class spaces like coffee shops, restaurants, *cantinas,* and outdoor venues (Ibarra 1998). By the 1970s, the *rocola* was an outdated technology superseded by the cassette and the 33-rpm record. Gradually, this old device was ascribed to *picanterías* (small restaurants) and *cantinas* located in lower-class neighborhoods, especially in the 24 de Mayo Street, an area known as a "red zone" in Quito prior to the "restoration" of the Centro Histórico in 2003.

The *cantina* and the *rocola* have not always been associated with the lower classes, or linked to one another. According to Ibarra, during the first half of the twentieth century, the *cantina* was a public space identified with middle-class bohemians (Ibarra 1998: 314). In contrast, the *chichería,* a place to drink *chicha* (indigenous corn beer), was identified with indigenous people and *cholos.* With the urban growth and the diversification of public spaces, the middle classes abandoned the *cantina* and sought new venues of socialization in *peñas folklóricas* (artistic center for folklore performance), bars, discotheques, and *salsotecas* (*salsa* dance hall). At the same time, indigenous people and *cholos* left the *chichería* for the *cantina.* It was in this period that the *cantina* acquired the negative connotation it has today.

Images of the *cantina* and the *rocola* have shaped a social imaginary that links *música rocolera* to drunkenness, violence, and the "bajo mundo" (underworld). Thus, the *cantina,* the *rocola,* and liquor became central characters in *música rocolera* lyrics. The *bolero* "En la cantina" (In the Cantina), recorded by Daniel Santos and Julio Jaramillo in 1974, describes this place as a shelter where men drink to forget their pains of love.

La cantina es el oasis del que tiene sed de besos
Del que tiene sed de abrazos, del que tiene sed de amor,
Del que pide entre sus rezos una luz que guíe sus pasos,
Una mano que lo lleve a donde no haya dolor…

Allí podrá contra la historia de su traición,
Allí podrá olvidar las penas del corazón.
Por eso en la cantina voy ahogando
Las penas que me quitan la razón

The *cantina* is the oasis for those who thirst for kisses
Of those who thirst for hugs, of those who thirst for love.
Of those who request in prayer a light to guide their steps
A hand to take them where there is no pain…

There [in the *cantina*] he will tell the story of his betrayal
There he can forget his pains of love
That is why in the *cantina* I am drowning
The pains that take away my reason…

Generally, the *rocola* is given the role of a close and unconditional friend, who not only understands the listener's feelings, but also is able to talk to others for him.

Rocolita de mis penas, eres mi fiel compañera
Y tú cuentas al mundo lo que sufro por su amor
Quiero que con sentimiento ahora le hagas entender
Que aún la estoy esperando, que regrese por favor.

Little jukebox of my sorrows, you are my faithful partner
And you tell the world what I am suffering for her love.
I want you to let her know now with sentiment
That I am still waiting for her, ask her to return please.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although *música rocolera* became a ubiquitous urban music in the 1970s, only in the late 1990s have Ecuadorian scholars given attention to this musical

expression, which brings thousands of listeners together in public venues. They use *música rocolera* as a generic label to refer to all types of musics produced and consumed by the urban lower classes, including Ecuadorian *música chicha, bombas* (Afro-Ecuadorian music from the Chota Valley), and even Peruvian *huaynos.* This usage, however, does not correspond to that used by producers, performers, and fans who do make distinctions between *música chicha* (music for dancing) and *música rocolera* (music for listening). This practice should call our attention to scholars' use of taxonomies that are divorced from those employed by the people we study.

Ecuadorian scholars define *música rocolera* as an array of musical genres whose lyrics privilege the *relación de pareja,* or couple relationship (Ibarra 1998, Quintana n/a, Moscoso 1999, Guerrero 2005). This term is used in a rather imprecise manner because there are numerous songs included in this category, like *sanjuanitos, pasacalles,* and *bomba,* whose lyrics make no reference to the couple relationship. Complicating things further, not all *boleros* and *pasillos* are considered *música rocolera,* but only certain Antillean *boleros* and those written by Ecuadorian composers since the late 1970s fit this category. In my view, more than an array of musical genres, *música rocolera* is a style defined by extramusical parameters, such as the social background of people who produce and consume it, as well as the performance contexts.

In general, Ecuadorian scholars have studied *música rocolera* from either a textual or a musical perspective, neglecting the actual people who listen to this music, as well as the contexts where it is performed. Some studies are clearly biased from their inception and only perpetuate the stereotyped view of *música rocolera.* In *La canción de rocola,* literary critic María Eugenia Moscoso (1999) seeks the meaning of the *música rocolera* through a semiotic analysis of the lyrics. However, her methodology and conclusions are dubious because she assumes that *música rocolera* is the music found in the *cantina;* therefore, she conducts fieldwork in bars located along the 24 de Mayo Street. In addition, the author centers her analysis on the lyrics of fifteen songs, most of which are Antillean *boleros* from the 1950s popularized by Julio Jaramillo and Daniel Santos. She neglects the Ecuadorian musical productions of the 1970s and 1980s, the period in which the actual *música rocolera* emerged, as well as the agency of performers who shaped its sound and image.

Música rocolera is often examined as a fixed product of popular culture rather than a genre in constant flux. Sociologist Soledad Quintana regards *música rocolera* as the quintessential expression of popular culture, in the sense of an expression created "for the people" and "by the people" (Quintana n/a: 9). Her notion of "popular," however, is problematic because she frequently interchanges the term *cultura popular* (popular culture) with *cultura de masas* (mass culture).

John Fiske's definitions of "mass culture" and "popular culture" help us distinguish the differences between these cultural phenomena. For him, mass culture refers to "the cultural 'products' put out by an industrialized, capitalist society," and popular culture to "the ways in which people use, abuse, and subvert these products to create their own meanings and messages" (Fiske 1989). By focusing on "*cultura de masas,*" Quintana obscures the heterogeneity of the lower classes and treats them as passive listeners consuming what the culture industries impose on them.

Following Bourdieu's concept of the "field," sociologist Santillán (2001) defines *música rocolera* as a field that encompasses all kinds of musical expressions associated with the populace, including *música chicha* and the *tecnocumbia.* Given that all these musics share the same performance contexts and are listened to by the same public in general, Santillán's approach better reflects the social dynamics behind the music. His analysis examines the production, consumption, and dissemination networks, thus taking into account the agency of the urban lower classes in expressing their identity through their musical choices. My only concern with this approach is that by placing all types of working-class music in the same category, Santillán overlooks the uses, functions, and ability of music to raise different emotions in the listeners. As mentioned earlier, working-class people do make distinctions between *música*

rocolera, música chicha, and the *tecnocumbia;* however, Santillán's view of the "field" obliterates these differences.

Sociologist Hernán Ibarra takes into account historical factors surrounding the emergence of *música rocolera* in the 1970s. He contests people's notion of *música rocolera* as the music that sounds in the *rocola,* and argues that this musical expression emerged precisely when the *rocola's* popularity began to decline (Ibarra 1999: 311). He does not regard Julio Jaramillo as *música rocolera* singer, though there are many aspects that link his image to the *rocola* (idem). Furthermore, he locates the origin of *música rocolera* in the coastal region. Ibarra's attention to historical and contextual aspects provides insights and reliable information from his particular position as witness and participant observer of the *rocolera* phenomenon. Like the other scholars mentioned above, however, he places an array of Ecuadorian musical genres in the *música rocolera* bag, thus neglecting their stylistic differences and functions.

DISCOURSES ABOUT *MÚSICA ROCOLERA*

In Ecuador, there is no consensus about what *música rocolera* is among its listeners and critics. The term means different things to different people according to their ethnicity, social class, gender, age, and educational background. Most of my interviewees believe *música rocolera* is the music listened to on the *rocola* or

jukebox. This vague definition, however, is problematic because many types of local and international music were listened to on the *rocola* in the 1950s and 1960s. The songs of Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Dámaso Pérez Prado, and Trío Los Panchos, to cite a few foreign artists, were frequently played in the *rocola,* but only Daniel Santos, Julio Jaramillo, and Alci Acosta, among others, were associated with *música rocolera.* Naldo Campos, a renowned composer and arranger of *música nacional* and *música rocolera,* rejects the term because of its negative connotation.

> I do not understand this label... Certain people underestimate its value… People who sing these types of songs are able to draw more than two to four thousands people to a coliseum. We should not underestimate it, we should not say with disdain, *"rocolera,"* as some people say. When I was very young, across the Parque El Centenario [the main park in Guayaquil's downtown area], in La Macarena, there was a coffee shop, and there, there was a *rocola.* In this place I listened to Frank Sinatra's song 'I Will Wait for You.' If we are going to underestimate the *rocola,* then Frank Sinatra is also *rocolero* (personal interview, 1997).[37]

Campos was upset when he recalled an incident regarding the "red chronicle" that aired on Radio Cristal about his *pasillo* "Tendrás que recordarme"

[37] No entiendo el calificativo. Ciertas personas menosprecian el valor que tiene. Gente que canta este tipo de canciones aglutina mas de dos mil a cuatro mil personas en un coliseo. No hay que menospreciar, no hay que decirlo con tanto desprecio, "rocolera", como dicen algunas personas. Cuando yo era jovencito, había al frente del Parque Centenario, la Macarena, había un café… y ahí había una rocola… y en esa rocola escuchí "I Will Wait for You" de Frank Sinatra. Si vamos a menospreciar a la rocola, entonces Frank Sinatra también es rocolero.

(You Will Have to Remember Me). Armando Romero Rodas, a well-known radio commentator and owner of Radio Cristal, called this *pasillo* "El pasillo asesino" (The assasin *pasillo*) because a man committed suicide when he was listening to it. Rodas' sensationalist label was reminiscent of the history articulated around the *pasillo* "El alma en los labios." According to Rodas' chronicle, the victim was experiencing an unbearable depression and was drinking heavily before he committed suicide. Campos stated that he, as a composer, did not compose music to make people drink and that that was each person's own choice. He remarked that people got drunk listening to other types of music too, such as rock and pop, but he did not understand why the stigma was placed only on *música rocolera* (personal interview, 2001).

This story shows how "stereotyping" and "labeling" have become effective "technologies of Otherness" to raise borders between "us" and "them." The lower classes criticize upper-middle-class Ecuadorians for having a "double standard" vis-à-vis *música rocolera.* The latter denounce the vulgarity of the lyrics, but nevertheless attend concerts in disguises to avoid any public association with this "guilty pleasure." The testimony of "Teresita Sinceridad," a woman who journalist Esteban Michelena interviewed in a bar, best reflects this situation:

> I cannot explain the insincerity of our people. I have seen doctors, architects, journalists, etc. attending our festivals with sunglasses and hats, as if hiding from a neighbor or colleague. Once inside, they take off the disguise and enjoy, sing, drink, and dance. *It seems that they are ashamed of getting together with working-class people* [my emphasis] (*Diners* 1988: 28).[38]

Teresita Andrade, a *música nacional* singer often associated with *música rocolera* because she started singing when the repertoire was at its peak, recalled a similar experience when she sang at private parties organized by wealthy people from Guayaquil. For these occasions, she would prepare a repertoire of traditional *pasillos* that she thought this audience would like to hear. However, she encountered unexpected attitudes.

> When they organized the "ding ding" [parties] in their houses, they asked for *rocola* songs composed by Segundo Rosero, such as "Seventeen Years [of age]" and "Bolero Rocolero"… At the beginning, we sang "*almidonados,*" [in a formal way], then everybody ended that night sitting on the floor with their legs crossed drinking from the same glass. They liked and enjoyed our music (personal interview, 2003).

For Roberto Zumba, one of the founders of the *música rocolera* style, the correct term to describe this style of music is "popular," rather than *rocolera*. According to him, the term "popular" points to the sentiments and life

[38] "No me explico lo que pasa con nuestra gente, no se sincera de una vez por todas. Yo he visto doctores, arquitectos, periodistas, etc., que van a nuestros festivales con gafas y sombrero, como escondiéndose del vecino o colega. Una vez adentro, se sacan el disfraz y gozan, cantan, toman y zapatean. *Como que les da vergüenza juntarse con su pueblo*…"

experiences of the "people," without the negative connotation that the word *rocola* has (interview, 2002). Composer Cristóbal Vaca, the author of several *música rocolera* hit songs in the 1970s, indicated that *música rocolera* was first conceived as an exacerbated expression of love. In the beginning the song lyrics were devoid of derogatory terms toward women. On the contrary, they expressed love and admiration for them. The *pasillo* "Te quiero, te quiero" (I Love You, I Love You) by Nicolás Fiallos exemplifies these types of lyrics, albeit written in a colloquial language (see p. 185).

As seen, the original intentions of composers and performers of *música rocolera* did not necessarily coincide with the perceptions of listeners and/or detractors, who have created their own ideas about this music. Thus, while most lower-class Ecuadorians think this music reflects their life experiences and incites people to drink, the upper-middle classes scorn it for the vulgarity and immorality of the lyrics. On the other hand, intellectuals and academic composers point to the lack of artistic quality and the way this music has degraded more established genres of *música nacional.* Mario Godoy, a researcher who has investigated traditional Ecuadorian music, regards this music as *música chicle* (bubble gum music) for the short life span it generally has. He describes *música rocolera* lyrics as "cheesy and catastrophic lyrics written by composers who have become poets

by forcing themselves to write."[39] These views echo Adorno's critiques on popular music, especially those related to the commercialization and standardization of musical forms (Adorno 1941).

PERIODIZATION OF *MÚSICA ROCOLERA*

The term *música rocolera* first appeared in the media in an interview with Chugo Tovar published in a 1969 issue of *Revista Estrellas.* When the journalist asked him if all his songs belonged to the kind of music people called *rocolera,* Tovar, known as *La nueva voz de las rocolas* (The New Voice of the Jukeboxes), responded affirmatively. He said that he liked the music that *el gran pueblo* (the masses) listen to. It was not until the late 1970s that the term *música rocolera* acquired the pejorative meaning it has today.

I identify three stages in the development of *música rocolera.* The first stage (1950s and 1960s) introduces the themes and images of the *cantina* and the *rocola,* with the performances by Daniel Santos, Julio Jaramillo, and various Colombian and Peruvian singers who popularized Antillean *boleros* in Ecuador. The second stage (early to mid 1970s) is a transitional period marked by two types of singers from the coastal region: 1) a group of young *música nacional* singers and composers whose *pasillos* were identified as "people music" and 2) a group of amateur singers from the coast who recorded covers of *boleros* and

[39] "… un letrismo cursi y catastrófico escrito por compositores que, a fuerza, se transformaron en poetas"(Godoy: n/a).

valses alluding to women in derogatory terms. The third stage (late 1970s) crystallizes a distinctive Ecuadorian singing style in the interpretation of singers known today as the "classics" of *música rocolera.*

THE FORERUNNERS

Música rocolera's image is associated with the controversial lifestyles and song repertoires of Daniel Santos (1916–1992) and Julio Jaramillo (1935–1978), two charismatic singers perceived as bohemians, womanizers, *machistas,* and *gente del pueblo* (people's people). Ibarra rightly argues that although both singers are normally identified as *música rocolera* singers and their songs were indeed listened to in the *rocolas,* they actually did not belong to this movement (Ibarra 1999: 312). In my view, these singers were the forerunners of a style of music that was at an early stage of formation.

Daniel Santos' raspy type of voice created a particular singing style that was imitated by other *rocola* singers, but it was his personal life that contributed to associate *música rocolera* with drunkenness and *machismo.* His performances in Ecuador were followed by scandals and violent episodes, some of which ended in his imprisonment. In 1956, for instance, in the middle of a performance at the Teatro Apolo in Guayaquil, he realized he would not be able to finish the concert due to a sudden throat pain. He apologized to his audience, who then reacted with unexpected violence and destroyed the theater's hall. Santos was fortunate to

escape from the turbulent audience alive, but was held responsible for the disaster and imprisoned for several days. These kinds of events, reminiscent of the *cantina* environment, contributed to shape Ecuadorians' negative ideas about *música rocolera.*

Julio Jaramillo, the Nightingale of America, became an international artist acclaimed for his performances of *boleros, pasillos, valses, tangos,* and *rancheras.* He was compared to legendary Mexican singer José Alfredo Jiménez, not only for his successful singing career, but also for his love of women. The "*machista*" mage was shaped by the many women with whom he became involved, and the many children he fathered in several Latin American countries.

His life resembled that of the working-class population. Born into a humble family, he had to work at an early age in order to help his mother support the household. Jaramillo embodied the image of an artist who came from below. Known by his initials, Jota Jota (J.J.), Jaramillo was famous for his rendition of "Nuestro Juramento" (Our Oath, 1965), a *bolero* that earned him the nickname "Mr. Juramento" in Uruguay. His popularity was such that fans from various Latin American countries believed he was a citizen of their country. Listen to CD, Example No. 10.

Jaramillo became an idol of the lower classes. However, the elites initially disparaged him not only for his bohemian lifestyle, but also for his ethnic and

social-class background. His early death in 1978[40] gave rise to several myths and discourses about his international popularity. One discourse implies that because Ecuadorians do not valorize their own artists, especially if they come from the populace, he had to leave his home country to become a famous singer. Jaramillo was considered a *cholo,* i.e. a person of mixed ethnic origin who, despite his artistic and economic success, could not climb Ecuador's social ladder. As in all Latin America, ethnicity is a strong identity marker, placing a person in a particular hierarchical position within the structure of society. Today, though, almost thirty years after his death, Julio Jaramillo is held in high esteem by all social classes because he is the only internationally known Ecuadorian singer. Ironically, many fans believe that he is actually better known today than when he was alive.

[40] There are several versions explaining the causes of his death, including chirrosis, hepatitis, and lung cancer.

Figure 8. Julio Jaramillo. Source: Book cover, *Siempre Julio. La otra cara de un ídolo*. Quito: Dino Producciones.

Jaramillo's early success as an artist in the 1960s coincided with a prosperous period for the national music industry. Although he recorded numerous traditional *pasillos* from the *música nacional* anthology (1920s–1950s), he became a signifier of *música rocolera* and his name associated with the *bolero* and the *rocola.* Many interviewees believed he was a *música rocolera* singer and, therefore, all *pasillos* he recorded were *música rocolera.* Others believed that all his songs were *música nacional* and, therefore, the famous *boleros* he sang were Ecuadorian *pasillos.*

The *bolero* "Nuestro juramento," composed by Puerto Rican Manuel de Benito and made famous by Jaramillo, provides a good illustration of this

phenomenon. In general, Ecuadorians from all social classes believe that "Nuestro juramento" is a *pasillo.* Even Ecuadorian scholars, like Hugo Benavides and María Eugenia Moscoso, take this view for granted. Benavides, for example, argues that Ecuadorian music was known throughout Latin America because Jaramillo performed "Nuestro juramento" in his concert tours (Benavides 2006: 81). His view contradicts the general perception of upper-middle-class Ecuadorians regarding the lack of international presence of Ecuadorian music. Listen to CD, Example No. 10.

To examine Ecuadorians' perceptions of this song, I conducted short interviews in the streets and parks of the Centro Histórico and the Mariscal district, asking people from different social classes, selected at random, if "Nuestro juramento" was Ecuadorian music. A vast majority of interviewees answered positively. Although a few people responded that it was a Caribbean *bolero,* they nevertheless regarded this song as Ecuadorian because Julio Jaramillo popularized it. In an indexical relationship, the song "Nuestro juramento" points to Julio Jaramillo because he was the most popular performer of this *bolero.* In turn, Julio Jaramillo indexes Ecuadorian music because he was the only national artist who was internationally known. As seen in Chapter 3, to talk about Ecuadorian music is to talk about the *pasillo,* which is considered the

musical symbol of "Ecuadorianness." The indexical chain is described in the following graphic.

NUESTRO JURAMENTO = PASILLO

"Nuestro juramento" ➔ Julio Jaramillo ➔ Ecuadorian music ➔ *pasillo* ➔ Ecuador

Other interviewees, however, linked "Nuestro juramento" with *música rocolera* because Julio Jaramillo is associated with images of the *cantina* and the *rocola*.

NUESTRO JURAMENTO - MÚSICA ROCOLERA

"Nuestro juramento" ➔ Julio Jaramillo ➔ *cantina* ➔ *música rocolera* ➔ populace

Although there is no determination as to whether scholars and fans are right or wrong in their classification of "Nuestro juramento," it is interesting to note why certain non-Ecuadorian songs are identified as Ecuadorian simply because Julio Jaramillo popularized them.

Along with Daniel Santos and Julio Jaramillo, other forerunners of *música rocolera* include Lucho Barrios (n/a) and Pedro Otiniano (n/a) from Peru; and Alci Acosta (b. 1938) and Tito Cortés (b. 1929) from Colombia. All of them sang the type of *boleros* known as *boleros cabareteros* (*boleros* listened to in lower-class bars), which were popular in the late 1940s throughout Latin America (Dueñas 1993: 30-31). Although various international artists popularized these

boleros, the forerunners of *música rocolera* developed a distinctive sound with their personal singing styles, which differed markedly from that of Mexican *boleros* performed by Trío Los Panchos and Armando Manzanero.

Known as the "King of the *Rocola*," Alci Acosta's singing style is characterized by a shredded type of voice and the accompaniment of piano, which he himself played. In 1964, he released his famous songs "Un disco más" (One More Record), "Odio gitano" (Gypsy Hate), and "La copa rota" (The Broken Wine Glass), all of which became hits in the *bolero* repertoire (Rico Salazar 1993: 280). Tito Cortés was famous for his interpretations of *música carrilera* songs, a type of Colombian working-class music. Lucho Barrios began his singing career in Guayaquil and traveled throughout South America with a repertoire of *boleros rocoleros* known as *boleros cantineros* in Peru. Pedro Otiniano popularized the *bolero* "Cinco centavitos" (Five Little Cents) by Héctor Ulloa, which became a continental hit in Julio Jaramillo's performance.

TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

In the late 1960s, a new generation of Ecuadorian singers began singing *música nacional* with an urban lower-class sensitivity. Most, like Chugo Tovar, Juan Álava, Kike Vega, Máximo León, and Roberto Calero, came from small towns located near Guayaquil. They started singing a repertoire of *pasillos* composed by contemporary musicians associated with the "people," such as

Abilio Bermúdez, Fausto Galarza, and Nicolás Fiallos. I will distinguish this type of *pasillo* as *pasillo rocolero*. These singers, first seen as the new voices of *música nacional,* recorded several albums for Fediscos. They became known as "rocoleros" when they started singing *boleros* and *valses* about betrayals and breakups. The fact that these singers performed both *pasillos rocoleros* and *boleros rocoleros* generated in the listeners the idea that the *pasillos* they sang were *música rocolera,* and vice versa.

In this period, a group of amateur musicians from the coastal provinces began recording *boleros* and *valses* that became hit songs. *Revista Estrellas* published interviews with various singers popular in the mid 1970s, such as Miguel Vélez, Vícor Franco, and Óscar Guerrero. The song titles suggest the lyrical content: "Camas separadas" (Separate Beds), "Este puñal" (This Dagger), and "Perdido por tu culpa" (I Am Lost because of You).

In 1975, Oscar Guerrero, a 24-year-old singer from the town of Milagro, was nominated "Revelación Rocolera" (Jukebox Revelation) of the year for "La pesetera," a song composed in the style of a Peruvian *valse. Pesetera* refers to a woman who toys with the feelings of men and sells her love for money *(pesetas)*. Fediscos changed the song title to "Me engañaste" (You Deceived Me) because the original title was considered offensive to women.

Mis amigos me han contado
que tú eres una cualquiera,
que andas con uno y con otro
y te llaman la pesetera.

My friends have told me
That you are a whore
That you go with one and another,
And people call you the *pesetera.*

It was during this transitional period that Discos Cóndor, a record company from Guayaquil, first promoted *música rocolera* with images of the *rocola* and the *cantina* on long-play album jackets. For example, on the album *Los bravos de la rockola* [sic] (The Brave Men of the Jukebox), a big bottle and four glasses are shown on the background of a *rocola.* Each glass reflects the picture of the most popular singers at that time: Miguel Vélez (Ecuador), Tito Cortés (Colombia), Lucho Barrios (Peru), and Cecilio Alva (Peru). See Figure 9. Another long-play jacket shows Cecilio Alva and Chugo Tovar in a *cantina* surrounded by empty beer bottles. See Figure 10.

Figure 9. LP Album Cover: Miguel Vélez, Tito Cortés, Lucho Barrios, and Cecilio Alva.

Figure 10. LP Album Cover: ChugoTovar and Cecilio Alva.

Figure 11. LP Album Cover. Tremendo dúo (Kike Vega and Chugo Tobar).

These images were very different from those promoting the new *pasillos* of the 1970s, which often included pictures of Ecuadorian monuments and landscapes such as the Rotonda of Guayaquil on the riverside. See figure 11.

THE "CLASSICS"

Six singers from the highland region represent the classical style of *música rocolera.* They are Roberto Zumba, Claudio Vallejo, Segundo Rosero, Ana Lucía Proaño, Teresita Andrade, and Juanita Burbano. All of these artists began their careers in the mid 1970s in singing contests organized by radio and television stations. Segundo Rosero, for example, traveled a long distance from his hometown Pimampiro in the northern highland region to Guayaquil in order to participate in the contest "Puerta a la fama" (Door to Fame), whose first prize consisted of recording a 45-rpm record.[41] In 1973, Ana Lucía Proaño, a singer from the mid-highland city of Riobamba, won the contest "Estrella Cristal" organized by Radio Cristal of Guayaquil. All these singers stated in media interviews that they became "people's artists" due to hard work, perseverance, and an ability to express deep sentiments in their performances.

These singers became the new generation of *artistas nacionales.* They did not sing traditional *pasillos* (1920s–1950s), but *boleros* and *pasillos* composed by young Ecuadorian composers such as Naldo Campos, Segundo Rosero, Fausto

[41] Segundo Rosero won the second prize. This program opened doors to his successful career.

Galarza, and Nicolás Fiallo. Unlike the authors and composers of traditional *pasillos,* whose names are part of the Ecuadorian music pantheon, these songwriters and composers are little known among upper-middle-class Ecuadorians.

Naldo Campos (b. 1949), a respected and well-known musician among his peers, deserves special attention because he was influential in shaping a distinctive Ecuadorian sound in the 1970s. He received his musical education at the National Conservatory of Guayaquil, and was the last *requinto* player of the famous Trío Los Brillantes. As the music arranger of Fediscos, he imprinted his personal style on the arrangements of *música nacional* and *música rocolera* and blurred the lines dividing them. He also made *música chicha* arrangements for Producciones Zapata and Productores Independientes in the 1980s and 1990s. As a composer, Campos had the opportunity to record his own *pasillos,* some of which became "classics" of *música rocolera. Música rocolera* singers often include his songs in their repertoire; however, *música nacional* artists, such as the Hermanos Miño-Naranjo, seldom perform his *pasillos.*

Advocates of *música nacional* condemn the stylistic transformations the *pasillo* underwent in the 1980s in terms of sound and lyrics. Their critiques point to the low prestige of *música rocolera,* which was, and continues to be, associated with stabbings, prison, deception, and treason.

> The original *pasillos,* the *valses* of national character, and other rhythms of yesteryear characteristic of Ecuador have adopted a *cantina* and black-like flavor due to the inclusion of *bongos* and other foreign instruments as well as to the exaggerated influence of artists from different nationalities (*El Comercio,* March 20, 1987).[42]

> In the *barrios,* what do they [performers] sing to the people? The song about the stabbings, the prison, the deception, the treason, the abandonment (*Hoy*, June 9, 1987).[43]

Detractors of *música rocolera* point to the banality and tastelessness of the new lyrics as the main reason for the decline of the traditional *pasillo,* as if a song's value were only defined by the poetry and lyrical content. Most importantly, they criticize the short life span and the commodity value it has.

> The lyrics and the melodies of many recently-composed *pasillos* are banal and tasteless; musicians do not look for poets, like before, in search of poetry with literary value to best set to the staff paper; now they are only interested in "making a hit song" to get royalties; they have forgotten that music is not a commodity but a primordial part of a people's culture. In our case, the *pasillo* is romantic sentiment, lyrical poem; it is what identifies us with respect to the folklore of other countries (*El Universo,* December 9, 1981).[44]

[42] "Los originales pasillos, los valses de factura nacional y otros ritmos antaño identificativos del Ecuador han adoptado sabor cantinero y 'negroide', en el caso de estos últimos, por implementacion de bongos y otros instrumentos ajenos debido a la influencia exagerada de artistas de diversas nacionalidades." *El Comercio*. Quito, marzo 20, 1987.

[43] "Si están en la barriada, que le cantan al pueblo? Pues la canción de la puñalada, de la cárcel, del engaño, de la traición, del abandono." *Hoy*. Junio 9, 1987. "Por eso cantan lo de la puñalada." Francisco Febres Cordero

[44] "Las letras y las melodías de muchos 'pasillos' recientes son cursis y chabacanas; los músicos ya no acuden a los poetas, como antes, en busca de piezas de valor literario para llevarlas al pentagrama; ahora solo les interesa 'pegar duro' para obtener regalías; han olvidado que la música

To certain degree, the social and aesthetic differences between the traditional *pasillo* and the *pasillo rocolero* resemble those between *conjunto* and *orquesta* music for Chicanos and Mexican-Americans in the Southwest (Peña 1985; 1999). It is safe to say that the *pasillo rocolero* reflects a working-class sensitivity, while the *traditional pasillo* mirrors an upper-middle-class aesthetic shaped in the 1930s. The difference is reflected in the lyrics, musical arrangements, singing style, and performance contexts, each reflecting the aesthetic values of their respective social group.

The stigmatized image *música rocolera* has today was greatly shaped by Aladino (b. 1956), a singer from Guayaquil known as "El mago de la rocola" (The Jukebox Magician) for his ability to sell *rocola* songs. He grew up in Barrio Cristo del Consuelo, a lower-class neighborhood located in the periphery of Guayaquil, and worked as a radio announcer before starting his singing career. In 1977, *Revista Estrellas* nominated him the "Revelación Rocolera" (Jukebox Revelation) of the year for his songs "Verdadero amor" (True Love) and "Lobo de la madrugada" (Dawn's Wolf). It is worth noting that Aladino has always sung *boleros,* but never *pasillos*. He changed *música rocolera's* image with the rude lyrics he wrote about women, as "Asciéndeme a marido" (Make Me Your

no es una mercancía cualquiera sino parte primordial de la cultura de un pueblo. En nuestro caso, el pasillo es sentimiento romántico, poema lírico; es lo que nos identifica ante el folklore de otros países. In "La descomposición de la música nacional." *El Universo,* December 19, 1981.

Husband) illustrates. The lyrics portray a man who asks his girlfriend to "upgrade" him from the status of boyfriend to that of a lover, implying it is time for the couple to start an intimate relationship. Listen to CD, Example No. 11.

Ya me cansé de ser tu enamorado
Ahora quiero que me asciendas a marido
Si tu quieres así, seguiremos bonito
O si no de una vez, rompamos nuestro amorcito.

Si en verdad me quieres ven duerme conmigo
No te hagas la tonta, haz lo que te digo
Sube despacito y atrás yo te sigo
Y verás que juntitos seguiremos bien bonito.

I am tired of being your boyfriend
Now I want you to make me your husband
If you want this, we will be together
If not, then let us break off our little love.

If you really love me, come sleep with me
Do not play the role of a fool, do what I say
Go up slowly and I will follow you
And you will see that we will have a nice time.

In various songs, Aladino incorporates spoken sections that include an array of claims and street jargon often used by working-class people. A recurrent topic is that of a man whose wife has abandoned him for a lover. The following excerpt of "La colorada infiel" (The Unfaithful Blonde) is an example of these kinds of lyrics. The first stanza includes double-entendre comments that allude to the couple's sexual incompatibility. In general, the text portrays the man as a

victim betrayed by a woman who did not care about his feelings. The lyrics also include comments about the man's social environment.

Cállate, no me digas nada que yo te ví
Un avión así como tú no puede aterrizar así en mi vida
en una pista tan pequeña como la mía.

Si te vas, que te vaya bien.
Pero yo quiero conseguir una, que cuando yo le diga
Mami, tú me quieres mucho?
Ráscame aquí que me pica.

¿Por qué? Porque yo no fui malo contigo.
Yo me la buscaba como un animal para darte todo lo que tú querías
Pero tú, tú no fuiste buena conmigo.
Yo me enojé, yo quiero que consigas alguien,
alguien bueno, que te trate mejor que yo.

Shut up, tell me nothing [of what] I saw in you"?
An airplane like yours cannot land in my life this way
On such a small runway like mine.

If you leave, I hope you will be fine
But I want to get one [woman] that when I say
Mommy, do you love me very much?
Scratch me here, where it itches me.

Why? Because I was not a bad man to you.
I was looking [for a job] like an animal to give you all that you wanted
But you, you were not a good woman with me.
I got angry, I want you to find someone else
Someone nice, that will treat you better than I did.

Like Julio Jaramillo who linked *música rocolera* with the drunkenness and the *cantina,* Aladino became another signifier linking *música rocolera* to rudeness

and vulgarity. His songs exemplified a coastal version of *música rocolera,* in contrast to singers from the highland region who performed songs devoid of spoken sections and street jargons.

PASILLOS AND BOLEROS ROCOLEROS

Although *boleros* and *pasillos* from the 1970s are both considered *música rocolera,* these genres are quite different in content and musical features. The *bolero rocolero* is closer in style to the Antillean *bolero* than to the Mexican romantic *bolero.* From the former it maintains the lyrical content, the accompaniment of *bongos* and *maracas,* and a melodramatic singing style reminiscent of Daniel Santos' performances. This type of *bolero* has received little scholarly attention, and is not even included in *bolero* anthologies, such as those compiled by Jaime Rico Salazar (1993) and Helio Orovio (1995). This is because the *bolero* is considered a romantic musical expression associated with the falling-in-love experience, rather than with love triangles and breakups.

Interestingly, Ecuadorian composers did not write *boleros* prior to the 1970s. The traditional *pasillo* was Ecuador's love song *par excellence* and had similar lyrics to those of famous Mexican and Caribbean *boleros.* Like the *bolero,* most *pasillo* lyrics point to a vague subject and place allowing listeners to personalize the lyrics. In her study of the *bolero,* Vanessa Knight affirms that

there is a dialogue between an uncertain "I" and an uncertain "You," whose meanings switch constantly according to the listener's perspective. Thus, s/he can identify with either the "I" who sings the song or with the person to whom the lyrics are intended (Knights 2000: 2). This is also true for the *pasillo,* where the neutral "I" and "You" and the variety of love situations narrated in the lyrics made the *pasillo* appealing to most listeners regardless of their gender or age. This point helps us understand the standing and ubiquity of the *pasillo* throughout the twentieth century in Ecuador.

In general, *música rocolera* presents the man's perspective in a couple's relationship, which is usually that of a victim. The *bolero* "La otra" (The Other), for example, tells the story of a man who notifies his wife that he has decided to leave his house and stay with his lover because she gives him the passion and understanding that he lacks in his marriage. The singer positions himself as a man who has worked hard to save his marriage, and in seeking the best for his children, decides to leave the house with his wife and the children. The song includes a recited text with a list of complaints about his wife. In concerts, this song always generates strong reactions on the part of the audience, probably because both men and women have had, or are having, a love-triangle experience in their lives, whether in the position of a wife, a husband, or a lover. Listen to CD, Example No. 12.

(Hablado):
¡Por favor, por favor! ¡Entiéndeme, caramba!
Ya no quiero saber nada contigo
Ya estoy harto de tus caprichos,
"la otra", "la otra", todo el tiempo "la otra"
"la otra" la creaste tú; sí, tú,
con tu falta de afecto, cariño y comprensión que jamás tuviste.

De qué te quejas?
La casa, los muebles, todo se queda contigo.
Sólo me voy yo, yo que nunca signifiqué nada para ti.
Total, no pierdes nada.
Mis hijos, pobrecitos mis pequeñuelos.
Te los dejo porque no quiero que tengan otra madre,
Porque para ellos, para ellos tú eres la mejor.

Algo más? Otra oportunidad?
¡Tú estás loca! Ja!
No me hagas reir!
Qué cosa? Que recién has comprendido que me quieres?
Que podemos empezar de nuevo?
Me estás pidiendo que me quede?

(Spoken)
Please, please. Understand me, damn it!
I do not want to have anything to do with you
I am tired of your scolding
"The other woman," "the other," all the time "the other"
"The other" was created by you, yes by you
With your lack of affection, tenderness, and understanding that you had.

What are you complaining for?
The house, the furniture, everything stays with you
It is me who leaves, me, who never meant anything to you.
After all, you do not lose anything.
My children, my poor little children
I leave them with you because I do not want that them to have another mother
Because for them you are the best.

Something more? Another chance with me?
You are crazy!
Do not make me laugh!
What? You have just now realized you love me?
That we can start over again?
Are you asking me to stay?

Mexican sociologist Anna María Fernández applies Bakhtin's notion of the *carnivalesqu*e in his analysis of gender roles in the *bolero.* According to him, in the *bolero* it is usually the men who love unfaithful women who then betray and leave them at their will. However, Fernández argues that in the "real" life it is not the man, but the woman who normally seeks a stable and monogamous relationship and who cries and prioritizes the couple's relationship (Fernández 2002: 178). The apparent change of gender roles in the lyrics seems to work as a mechanism that helps men cope with the anxiety produced by having to maintain a masculine figure in a *machista* society. It is only in songs that men can express their sufferings, pains, and vulnerable selves without challenging the view of their masculinity.

Fernández affirms that this type of lyric carries verbal and symbolic violence toward women manifesting itself in a sexualized discourse that diminishes women's values (Fernández 2002: 240). At the macro level, these messages both reproduce and shape gender relationships in a *machista* society because the messages encoded in the song lyrics are disseminated by the mass media and internalized by men and women as normative behavior.

In the past two decades, women have responded to *boleros rocoleros* with provocative lyrics like those in "Asciéndeme a marido." Paraphrasing the initial lyrics of the song, the female singer tells her boyfriend that he is free to leave the relationship if he is tired of being just her boyfriend. In the *bolero* "El matrimonio" (The Marriage), the woman tells her boyfriend that she will not start the stage of intimate relationship without a marriage commitment. Both the content and language used in the lyrics reinforce the image of *música rocolera* as low-class and vulgar. Examples include phrases like, "You think that I was born yesterday" and "Kisses I give you as many as you want, but from there not one more step." The female singer's rude attitude while singing these songs also adds certain degree of vulgarity to the music.

Tú piensas que soy muy ingenua o caída de la mata
Crees que en mí has encontrado una víctima más.
Conmigo te equivocaste, primero el matrimonio

Besos te doy los que quieras, pero de ahí ni un paso más.
Quieres que a ti yo me entregue sin ningún compromiso
Te estás pasando de listo, eso no vas a lograr.

You think that I am innocent or that I was born yesterday?
You believe that in me you have found one more victim
With me you have made a mistake, first we get married.

Kisses I give you as many as you want, but from there not one more step.
You want me to offer myself to you without any commitment.
You think you are smart, but you will not get it.

As we have seen so far in this chapter, *música rocolera* deals with negative aspects of the couple relationship; however, I must insist that the lyrics of *pasillos rocoleros* and *boleros rocoleros* are quite different. Juanita Burbano noted that the language of *pasillos rocoleros,* which she regards as sentimental music, distinguishes itself in terms of style from that of *boleros rocoleros.* She said:

> Our music has always been sad. The difference is that before, when the author wanted to express feelings of pain or betrayal, he did so in a subtle and poetic manner. When the *rocola* movement began, there were songs spoken in colloquial language. For example, instead of saying "It hurt me so much when you left me alone, looking for another illusion," the new style said "You betrayed me and left with another." That was the difference between the sentimental music of the 1970s and the new *música rocolera*" (interview, 2003).

The co-existence of both types of *pasillo*—the *traditional pasillo* and the *pasillo rocolero*—contests elite images of the nation, which have been dominant during most of the twentieth century. Also known as *pasillos para el pueblo* (*pasillos* for the people), the *pasillos rocoleros* do not talk about infidelity and revenge in the explicit manner *boleros rocoleros* do. The lyrics of the *pasillo* "Te quiero, te quiero" (I Love You, I Love You) by Nicolás Fiallos, for example, are in essence a love declaration expressed in a colloquial language. Devoid of

refined poetry and performed by *música rocolera* singers, this song is perceived as *música rocolera.* Listen to CD, No. 13).

Cada día que pasa, cada hora, un minuto
Yo siento que te amo, y te amo mucho más.
No hay distancia ni tiempo, ni santo en ningún templo
Que impidan que te diga te quiero, te quiero.

Each day that passes, each hour, each minute
I feel I love you, and I love you much more.
There is no distance in time, neither a saint in any temple
Which prevents me telling you, I love you, I love you.

The *pasillo* "Diecisiete años" (Seventeen Years [of age]) by Fausto Galarza is, perhaps, the best-known *pasillo rocolero* in Ecuador. Its lyrics portray a man confessing his love to a beautiful seventeen-year-old girl who is just starting to live her adult life. He compares her eyes with the sun beams, and asks God to bless her life. Interestingly, most Ecuadorians think this *pasillo* epitomizes the essence of *música rocolera.* Their perceptions are greatly influenced by the image of Segundo Rosero, a singer from the Chota Valley who popularized this song at the national level. Juan Carlos Morales, journalist and author of Roseros' biography, stated in his study that *música rocolera* was once defined as "the music that Segundo Rosero sings" (Morales 2001: 136). This statement has strong racial connotations given the fact that Rosero is a *mestizo* singer with noticeable Afro-Ecuadorian and indigenous features. In addition, "Diecisiete años" shows musical features characteristic of indigenous music, such as pentatonic-based

melodies and musical arrangements that include high-pitched accordion-like timbres, a sound typical of *yaravíes* and *sanjuanitos mestizo.* Rosero's singing style also defined "Diecisiete años" as *música rocolera* due to his nasal voice timbre. Thus, Rosero became another signifier of *música rocolera,* linking this style of music with the "ethnic Other."

Figure 12. CD jacket. Segundo Rosero.

Yo vivía triste, sumido entre sombras
Sin pensar siquiera que existe la vida
Pero me ha llegado a mí este momento
Y a la edad que tengo me nace un amor.

Tiene en su mirada los rayos del sol
Y en su linda boca un lindo candor
Tiene en su mirada, tiene en su boquita un soplo de vida,
Tiene lo que nadie tiene en esta vida para ser bonita.

Diecisiete años cruzan por su vida y está en su delirio
Yo beso sus labios candorosa y linda, que Dios la bendiga.

I lived sad, immersed in shadows
Without even thinking that life exists.
But this moment has come to me
And at my age a love is born.

She has in her glance the sunrays
And in her beautiful mouth a beautiful candor.
She has in her glance, she has in her little mouth a puff of life.
She has what nobody has [virtues] in this life to be pretty.

Seventeen years cross in her life, and she is in her passion.
I kiss her lips, candid and beautiful, may God bless her.

Although "Diecisiete años" makes no reference to the *cantina* and the *rocola,* the fact that Rosero popularized this song, and the fact that the *pasillo* was normally performed in the context of *música rocolera* concerts and by *música rocolera* singers, already links this music with the *rocola,* the *cantina,* and the populace. Listen to CD, Example No. 14.

MÚSICA ROCOLERA FESTIVALS

In 1979, music entrepreneurs from Guayaquil organized the first *música rocolera* festivals, one-night-concert events that brought together thousands of *música rocolera* fans. These concerts started at night and ended approximately at four or five in the morning. The term "festival" pointed to the participation of international artists, such as Pedro Otiniano and Lucho Barrios. Licor Cristal and Trópico Seco, two Ecuadorian liquor companies, sponsored these events. They

advertised their products by placing huge plastic bottles with their labels on each side of the stage. Vendors walked around the concert venue selling these products in bottles, or in plastic bags when alcohol sale was prohibited. People mixed these drinks with soda.

The first time I attended a festival was in the summer of 1997, when I was conducting brief research in Quito for my master's thesis. The concert began at approximately 8 p.m. When I left at 11:30 p.m., people were still arriving in the *coliseo,* while others were leaving. I was surprised to see children of all ages at the concert, who were allowed to enter without an entrance fee. Overall, the place was transformed into a big *peña,* where singers stayed on the stage as long as the public requested their songs. Each performer sang about four to five songs and on occasion extended their presentations to 30 or 45 minutes, depending on the public's response and singer's prestige. Whistles, jeers, and modest or no applause signaled to the artist that it was time to end the presentation.

The concert I attended was poorly organized. There were long intermissions between acts. The lighting and the amplification system met only the basic requirements for listening and viewing. Not only did the concert begin late, but some artists announced in the promotional flyers did not even show up. This scenario of disorganization was characteristic of *rocolera* shows in the 1990s. Concert promoters, who were usually musicians or radio station owners,

had neither experience in organizing such massive concerts, nor were they willing to invest more capital in better amplification systems.

Most performers were renowned *música rocolera* singers; however, a few *música nacional* artists of the younger generations interpreted traditional *pasillos, albazos,* and *pasacalles* as well. I was surprised to hear this repertoire in such a context because the concert had been promoted as a *música rocolera* festival. Only a few people in the audience danced to the lively rhythm of *albazos* and *pasacalles,* but many drank Licor Cristal while listening to *boleros* and *pasillos rocoleros.* Having few performance opportunities as a result of the decline of *música nacional* concerts in the 1980s, *música nacional* singers took advantage of *música rocolera* festivals to perform in public. The presence of *música nacional* artists in *música rocolera* festivals reinforced the association of *música rocolera* with *música nacional.*

Drinking is the main feature associated with *música rocolera* contexts. My observation of several concerts, however, showed me a different reading of why people drink much in these events. In 2003, I attended a concert organized by Radio Presidente, the taxi drivers' radio station, on the occasion of Valentine's Day in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo. I decided to leave the camcorder and the tape recorder at home and come to the concert as another fan. I sat in the amphitheater beside Fanny, a young seamstress, and her husband José, a

construction worker. They, as many other people in the audience, shared their drinks with their neighbors sitting around them. Several times they offered me a small plastic glass with a mixture of Trópico with soda. They drank from the same little plastic glass. Being concerned about hygiene, I kindly rejected the offer on the basis that I did not drink. Both Fanny and José looked into my eyes and assured me that I could trust them because they were "*gente seria*" (serious people). With their attitude, I had no other choice than to drink a sip from the glass they extended me.

Figure No.13. Fanny and José at a concert in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo. Photograph by the author.

A few minutes later, I received another drink from an old man sitting six or seven seats to my left side. When I looked to see who had sent that drink, the man raised his plastic glass with a big smile and a cheering gesture, to which I kindly responded by drinking another sip from the glass he had sent to me. After a

couple of hours and many sips of Trópico, I moved to a section close to the concert stage where I met a retired military man with his girlfriend, who insisted that I share a drink with them. People sitting close to the stage offered drinks to the singers. At one point, it seemed to me that the sharing of drinks was a social act bringing people together, at least for the length of the event.

There is a trend among Ecuadorian scholars to compare *música rocolera* festivals to a big *cantina* (Ibarra 1998: 316). While detractors of *música rocolera* argue that this music incites people to drink, I experienced a different dynamic during the concert described above. I wrote in my field notes that I had the impression that people attending the festival drank to reciprocate the kindness and solidarity manifested in the act of sharing. The sharing of drinks reminded me of indigenous *Fiestas* de San Juan, or Inti Raymi festivities, where reciprocity functions as a way to strengthen group solidarity and to thank the *Pachamama* (Mother Earth) symbolically for the blessings she has bestowed, ensuring in this way prosperity and a good harvest the next year.

As in most indigenous festivities, it seemed to me that attendees regarded the festival as a time set apart from the routine of daily life, and a place where hierarchical relations can be temporarily set upside down. Wibbelsman, for example, has described in her study of Inti Raymi Festival how the sharing of drinks symbolically reflects the principle of reciprocity in communal relationships

(Wibbelsman 1999). On the eve of the festivity, indigenous people provide food and *chicha* to the visiting groups who bring music and dance in the middle of the night (see chapter 5). Indigenous people consume *chicha* in other religious festivities throughout the highland region, such as *La Mama Negra* (The Black Mother) and *Corpus Christi* (Botero 1991). Likewise, indigenous and *mestizo* people share *chicha* in life-cycle ceremonies such as weddings and funerals. Overall, drinking is an endogenous element of indigenous culture, thereby, when the peasants migrated to the city, they continued to practice their traditions, albeit with variations. From this perspective, *música rocolera* festivals were transformed into social spaces where indigenous and *mestizo* people were able to recreate aspects of their traditional culture.

MÚSICA ROCOLERA IN NEW YORK

In the aftermath of the decline of the Panama hat business in the 1960s, the main economic activity of the provinces of Azuay and Azogues, people from this region emigrated to the United States to pursue the "American dream" (Jokisch 2002). This community of Ecuadorian migrants established in New York and Chicago, and became the audience for *música rocolera* festivals. Hugo Zavala and René Torres, two music entrepreneurs who had established their businesses in Newark and Queens, NY, respectively, organized these events.

A *música nacional* singer in his youth, Hugo Zavala organized festivals in Quito, which he later called *Festival de la rocola* (*Rocola* Festivals) when he moved to New York. His son, Mauricio Zavala, mentioned that in the 1980s the *colonia ecuatoriana* (Ecuadorian colony) in New York was so small that concerts were promoted by phone calls (interview, 2003). René Torres organized from 1987 to 1998 his own festivals in nice social clubs and restaurants, which had capacities for about two to three hundred people. To avoid the saturation of the small musical market, both Zavala and Torres organized only five or six concerts per year with the most popular singers in Ecuador. Torres brought Naldo Campos, Claudio Vallejo, Ana Lucía Proaño, and other *rocolera* singers to New York, and organized concert trips in places with a large concentration of Ecuadorians.

Música rocolera singers who were invited to sing in New York promoted themselves as "international artists" in Ecuador, while music entrepreneurs considered Ecuadorian music as "international music" because it was performed beyond the national borders. Detractors of *música rocolera,* however, rejected this view because only Ecuadorian migrants listened to it abroad. I will discuss this issue further in Chapter 7. It is worth noting that in this period, Ecuadorians from all social classes in New York and in Ecuador never referred to *música rocolera* as *música nacional,* or vice versa, as happened in the late 1990s (see Chapter 8).

Middle-class Ecuadorians from Guayaquil and Quito also migrated to New York in the 1960s and 1970s. Unlike lower-class Ecuadorians from Azuay and Azogues, their musical taste revolved around the traditional *música nacional.* It was in this period that Trío Los Brillantes and the Hermanos Miño-Naranjo traveled frequently to the United States to sing in civic commemorations organized by the Ecuadorian colonies. As with Ecuadorians in Ecuador, Ecuadorians in New York were divided in their musical tastes, reflecting their social class aesthetics through their musical choices. This division, however, was not antagonistic in the context of The Big Apple city, where the small Ecuadorian community represented only one of the many Latin American groups.

CONCLUSION

Música rocolera is generally associated with the music listened to in the *rocola* by the lower classes. Initially, it became a generic label for *boleros* and *valses* popular on the coast, whose lyrics dealt with negative aspects of the couple relationship such as revenge and breakups. Then, highland musicians composed *pasillos* for "the people" with *rocolera* aesthetics very different from the traditional *pasillos.* The emergence of the *pasillo rocolero* coincided with the decline of the traditional *pasillo,* thus reflecting the social transformation that the Ecuadorian society was going through.

The *pasillos rocoleros* of the 1970s point to the indigenous roots of the *mestizo* nation and demonstrate indigenous influences more clearly than the older variety. It could be argued that they actually do a better job of symbolizing the *mestizo* nation with the pentatonic-based melodies, slow tempos, and a preference for high-pitched and nasal voices. These are musical traits characteristic of indigenous and *mestizo* music, rather than of *música nacional* from the 1920s–1950s. In the beginning, *música rocolera* composers, especially those from the highland region, conceived the *pasillos* they composed as exacerbated sentimental songs. However, this conception differs from the perception different social-class Ecuadorians have today of this music. The divorce between the original conception and the current perceptions of this music reflects the agency of listeners generating their own musical meanings, rather than simply grasping those intended by the authors or culture industries.

In the 1970s and 1980s, *música rocolera* was not identified with *música nacional,* though there were elements that related one style to the other, such as the presence of singers who interpreted both types of repertoire. Four musicians—Julio Jaramillo, Naldo Campos, Aladino, and Segundo Rosero—contributed to shape the image and sound of *música rocolera* with their controversial lifestyles, musical arrangements, lyrical content, and performances. Julio Jaramillo's bohemian lifestyle linked his song repertoire with the image of the *cantina.* Naldo

Campos blurred the sound distinctions between *música nacional* and *música rocolera* with his musical arrangements in both styles of music. Using street jargon, Aladino's lyrics linked *música rocolera* to rudeness and vulgarity. Finally, Segundo Rosero's singing style was associated with his mixed indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian ethnic background.

Música rocolera became the expression of a socially and culturally alienated lower-class population, which was marginalized in the processes of modernization, industrialization, and urbanization of the country. This music gave continuity to the sentiments of despair and nostalgia expressed in traditional *pasillos,* albeit in a new manner. In the newer repertoire, the woman is no longer the object of idealization but the source of unhappiness and the recipient of claims of not understanding the emotional needs of her partner. The woman described in *música rocolera* songs leaves him for another man and does not care about his feelings. While the idealized woman in traditional *pasillos* was a metaphor for the elite nation, I suggest that the unfaithful woman in *pasillos rocoleros* becomes a metaphor for a nation that has betrayed lower-class Ecuadorians in their hopes for a better future.

CHAPTER 5

MUSICA CHICHA :

THE TROPICALIZATION OF MÚSICA NACIONAL

The 1960s and 1970s marked a period of "tropicalization" of Latin American music. By tropicalization I mean the fusion of Afro-Caribbean rhythms with national and regional musical styles. Two particular genres—*salsa* and *cumbia*—had great influence in the musical development of each locality. Largely based on Cuban and Puerto Rican forms, *salsa* developed in New York City's Latino barrios and became a transnational Pan-Latin American music with local expressions in Colombia and Venezuela (Waxer 2002, Berríos-Miranda 2002). In the 1960s, the Colombian *cumbia* spread internationally and acquired national overtones, displacing the *bambuco* as the musical symbol of "Colombianness" (Wade 2000). Soon the *cumbia* rhythm was adapted to regional musical genres, giving origin to diverse types of working-class music such as *música chicha* and *tecnocumbia* in Peru, *tex-mex* in the United States, *cumbia villera* in Argentina, and *música grupera* in Mexico. As a music network, *salsa* has been studied from various perspectives and in different geographic areas (Aparicio 1998, Román-Velásquez 2002, Hosokawa 2002, Waxer 2002). By contrast, the *cumbia* network

has received little scholarly attention, to such an extent that *cumbia*-derived genres and styles are seldom studied in connection to one another.

Música nacional underwent two paths of tropicalization. The first emerged in the late-1960s and early 1970s with the rise of tropical orchestras and the influence of the *cumbia* and *salsa* craze in Ecuador. The second path developed in the late 1970s with rural migrations and combined with the influence of Peruvian *música chicha*. In general, upper-middle-class Ecuadorians danced to *salsa* renditions of *música nacional*, while the lower classes danced to *chicha* versions performed by music bands. Orchestras and *chicha* bands tropicalized different types of *música nacional* genres, thus defining their audiences and the social contexts for performances. While tropical orchestras played tropical versions of *pasillos*, *chicha* bands played *sanjuanitos* and *yumbos*.

The commercial boom and re-naming of *música chicha* as *música nacional bailable*, as well as the lack of commercial visibility of traditional *música nacional* in the 1990s, are symptomatic of the weakening of the elites' socio-cultural hegemony and the emergence of indigenous political power. This phenomenon is particularly observed in the realm of politics. Colonel Lucio Gutiérrez, an army officer who participated in the indigenous coup d'état that ousted President Yamil Mahuad in 2000, and economist Rafael Correa, a former minister of economics known for his leftist ideology, won the presidential

elections with the support of the Ecuadorian indigenous party in 2002 and 2006, respectively. Ecuadorians became skeptical of the leadership of the dominant classes, who have not been able to bring progress and solutions to basic problems in the areas of education, health, and social reforms. The fact that both presidents promoted a populist agenda and were not identified with the elites' political parties influenced the voters' decision greatly.

In this chapter I examine the rise of tropical orchestras in Ecuador and their attempt to modernize *música nacional* with Caribbean rhythms. Second, I analyze the emergence of Ecuadorian *música chicha* as an expression articulating a modern indigenous identity in the urban context. Further, I examine its development as a music embodying nationalist feelings and indigenous pride among the lower-class population. For these purposes, I analyze the song lyrics, musical arrangements, and discourses about its artistic value from both an elite and subaltern perspectives. It is my contention that the upper-middle classes exclude indigenous people from their imagination of the nation symbolically by stigmatizing *música chicha* as vulgar and worthless, while the latter group express their national belonging by regarding and renaming their music as *m úsica nacional*, the elites' term for Ecuadorian national music.

THE RISE OF TROPICAL ORCHESTRAS

In the 1960s and 1970s, tropical orchestras in Ecuador entertained at upper-middle-class social events such as weddings, anniversaries, graduations, and *quinceañeras* (birthday parties for fifteen-year-old girls), which generally were held in private homes and social clubs. These orchestras played a vast repertoire of dance music, including *pasodobles*, *cumbias*, *salsa*, *baladas*, and *música nacional* medleys. This was a golden period for *música nacional* and for Ecuadorian artists, who competed with famous international singers on the billboards. *Albazos* such as "De terciopelo negro" (Of Black Velvet) by Jorge Araujo, and "Avecilla" (Little Bird), an anonymous popular song, were among the top hits. In September 1966, *Revista Estrellas* ranked "Avecilla" in the tenth position, while the famous *cumbia* "Tina" by Lucho Bermúdez occupied the fifteenth rank. Two *boleros* recorded by Ecuadorian singers Julio Jaramillo and Olimpo Cárdenas—"Licor Bendito" (Blessed liquor) and "Azabache" (Black Color)—were in the billboard charts' first two positions. In comparison, Los Iracundos, the famous Uruguayan rock band known as the South American Beatles, and Raphael, the renowned Spanish *balada* singer, were in fourth and seventh positions, respectively.

Tropical orchestras resembled the big band orchestras of the mid-twentieth century with elaborate arrangements and numerous musicians dressed in formal attire. The most popular were the Blacio Jr. Orchestra, Los Jokers, Juan Cavero's

Orchestra, Salgado Jr. Orchestra, and Don Medardo and his Players. They all began playing *cumbia* and *salsa* covers, emulating famous Colombian orchestras such as Los Graduados, Los Hispanos, and Black Stars. To expand their repertoire, some orchestras adapted *cumbia* and *salsa* rhythms to renowned songs of the *música nacional* anthology. Juan Cavero, for example, played *salsa* renditions of the *pasillos* "Como si fuera un niño" (As If I Were a Child) and "Rosario de Besos" (Rosary of Kisses) by Francisco Paredes Herrera. Los Joker's adapted the *cumbia* rhythm to the popular *fox incaico* "La bocina" (The Horn).

The tropicalization of these songs produced different reactions among Ecuadorians. Highland composer Rudecindo Inga Vélez (1901-1984), the author of "La bocina," was delighted to see people dancing to his *fox incaico,* even though its tempo and character had been substantially modified. *Música nacional* advocates, however, considered this arrangement a threat to *música nacional*. Pepe Jaramillo (b. 1930), Julio Jaramillo's brother and a beloved *música nacional* singer, regarded such changes as "a sacrilege that should be punished by Ecuadorian law."[45] Héctor 'Manito" Bonilla (1935-1984), Ifesa's music arranger, shared his point of view:

> It is not good to change the rhythm of *música nacional* although now, even classical music changes its rhythm. In my view, it is preferable to keep the purity of our rhythms. Record producers

[45] "…un sacrilegio que debiera ser penado por las leyes ecuatorianas." *El Comercio*, Enero 3, 1986. B-5.

> change the rhythm of *cumbia*, "tropicalizing" in this way the songs… It is not our own music anymore; these are only adaptations of foreign music. Music is disfigured, though it is better known. I think this is wrong because the meaning gets distorted.[46]

Despite critiques of a supposed "contamination" of *música nacional*, Ecuadorians enjoyed dancing to tropical renditions of *pasillos* as much as they enjoyed dancing to Afro-Caribbean dance music. Rather than stigmatizing people who listened and danced to this repertoire, as was the case with *música chicha* in the 1980s and 1990s, critics were more interested in preserving the "purity" and "authenticity" of Ecuadorian music. They rejected any change in the *pasillo* performance because, by mixing national and international rhythms, tropical orchestras were blurring identifiable cultural markers that distinguished Ecuadorian from non-Ecuadorian music. Critics regarded identity as a fixed and monolithic cathegory, rather than a notion that is constantly challenged and redefined by its holders. It is worth noting that these critiques related to the preservation of the *pasillo*, an upper-middle-class symbol of "Ecuadorianness," rather than to the *sanjuanito* or any other musical genre associated with the indigenous population.

[46] "No es dable que se cambia el ritmo de la música nacional; aunque ahora hasta la música clásica cambia de ritmo. En mi concepto creo que sería preferible mantener la pureza de nuestro ritmo. Los productores de las casas disqueras le dan el cambio de ritmo de acuerdo a las cumbias, 'tropicalizando' de este modo las canciones…. Claro, ya no es nuestra propia música; son solo adaptadas a música de otro origen. La música se daña pero se da a conocer. Creo que es malo porque distorsiona su sentido." *El Universo*. September 22, 1981.

Critics of tropical renditions of *música nacional* did not recognize that tropical orchestras were acting as agents of modernization by adapting international/global sounds to local musical practices (Robertson 1995). Rather than a recent development, this process of cultural exchange between local and foreign expressive forms has been a continual trend in the Ecuadorian arts. Michael Handelsman notes in his study of globalization in Ecuador, "Ecuadorians have always been nourished by other cultures, which they appropriate to create original expressions in all the arts" [my translation] (Handelsman 2005: 46).[47] He provides the example of the Escuela Quiteña de Pintura (Quito's School of Painting) during the colonial period, whose members imitated the religious imagery of the European arts, albeit in a very idiosyncratic style in terms of textures and colors, which reveals the artistry and originality of Ecuadorian painters.

In the early 1970s, organists began to compete with tropical orchestras as providers of social entertainment as a result of the arrival of the Baldwin organ "fun machine" in Ecuador. This instrument had a music box with preset rhythms of *samba*, *bolero*, waltz, swing, and march, which allowed organists to play a variety of dance music. The organ became a very popular instrument for upper-middle-class social events due to its versatility and low cost. Needless to say, it

[47] "Los ecuatorianos siempre se han nutrido de otras culturas, apropiándose de ellas para así crear expresiones originales en todas las artes." (Handelsman 2005: 46).

was less expensive to hire one or two musicians (when a drum set was added), rather than a full orchestra. It was also easier to accommodate a few instruments in a living room, or in the backyard, than ten to sixteen musicians requiring an amplification system.

The emergence of tropical orchestras and organists providing happy dance music for all types of social events reflected Ecuadorians' optimism for a better future due to petroleum income, which financed the modernization of the country. According to economist Alberto Acosta, the mass media also disseminated images of Ecuador "as if the country had reached heaven's doors and found solutions to its social problems and underdevelopment" (Acosta 2001: 130). The rapid growth of Guayaquil and Quito, the construction of modern buildings, and the increase of jobs in the public sector contributed to create this illusion.

Upper-middle-class Ecuadorians danced to Ecuadorian music; however, it was usually played at the end of the party, when many guests had left and most of those who remained were a bit drunk**.** Eventually, this practice gave rise to several discourses pointing to Ecuadorians' lack of pride for their national music. One discourse suggests that, because of its sad character, Ecuadorian music must be played at the end in order to maintain a cheerful atmosphere in the party. Another discourse says that if Ecuadorians were proud of their music, they would dance to the lively *sanjuanitos* and *pasacalles* at the beginning or in the middle of the party

rather than at the end. Eduardo Zurita, a renowned organist from the early l970s, stated: "Ecuadorian music is in a clandestine state [*estado clandestino*]. It is 'played' in the early morning when nobody listens to it, or when those who do listen have lost their senses...."[48] Gradually, this discourse spread in elite circles and became a generalized opinion among all social-class Ecuadorians. Chapter 7 will expand on these discourses and perceptions of Ecuadorian music.

THE RISE OF MÚSICA CHICHA

Música chicha, the second vein of "tropicalization" of *música nacional*, was the rural migrants' cultural response to the modernization of the country. Both Ecuadorian and Peruvian *música chicha* emerged in the aftermath of the rural-to-urban migrations caused by the agrarian reforms held in both countries. Peruvian scholars have described the invasion of rural peasants in the capital as the "ruralization" or "Andeanization" of Lima (Romero 2002, Turino 1988), while their Ecuadorian counterparts have called this phenomenon the "*rocolización*" of Ecuador (Santillán 2002). This term, which derives from the images of the *rocola* and the *cantina*, has come to identify the extremely poor conditions in which migrants and working-class people live (see Chapter 4). The presence of Andean migrants in Lima changed the ethnic physiognomy of the

[48] "La música ecuatoriana vive un estado de clandestinidad. Se la 'toca' en las madrugadas cuando nadie escucha, o cuando quienes lo hacen están ausentes de la realidad..." *El Comercio*, January 3, 1986.

capital, especially with the mushrooming growth of *barrios jóvenes* (working-class neighborhoods) in the peripheral areas. Quito, however, has always had a high percentage of indigenous and *mestizo* people living to the north and south of the city. It would be misleading to talk about an "Andeanization" of a highland city because the migratory movement changed the social dynamics and degree of integration of the city, rather than its ethnic configuration.

The Centro Histórico of Quito of the 1970s can be viewed as a microcosm of the social transformations occurring in the capital. Declared a World Heritage Site of Humanity in 1978 because of its unique colonial architecture, the Centro Histórico changed its status from a center of elite cultural life in the first half of the twentieth century to a sort of lower-class market visited by tourists, peasants, and blue-collars working in the public sector, particularly in the municipal offices. The Government Palace, the Cathedral of Quito, the Plaza de San Francisco, the Teatro Sucre, and the neo-classic building of the Banco Central del Ecuador are important landmarks that speak to the high social status of this place. The house-museum of María Augusta Urrutia, an upper-class woman, philanthropist, and former owner of most lands to the north and south of Quito, exemplifies the splendor in which wealthy and aristocratic families lived. A two-story construction with multiple rooms around a central patio, this house was lavishly decorated with European furnishings, chandeliers, and antiques.

The Centro Histórico changed its appearance drastically when the capital began to expand in the 1950s and the elites moved to the Mariscal district in the north of Quito (Ortiz 2004). By the 1970s, the Centro Histórico resembled a widespread street market, with street vendors appropriating the sidewalks, including those around the Government Palace and the Plaza de San Francisco. Old aristocratic houses were transformed into storage places, retail stores, coffee shops, and small restaurants serving inexpensive lunches. The Centro Histórico became synonymous with low-price merchandise such as clothing, home appliances, CDs and other discount products. Itinerant shoe-shiners and indigenous women selling their produce in the streets became commonplace.

Being in the heart of the capital, the Centro Histórico also became a bus transit center of convenience where, because of the layout of the city, all public transportation obligatorily passed through in order to circulate to the north or the south. The 24 de Mayo, a street located a few blocks from the Plaza de la Independencia, acquired the reputation of a red light district with numerous bars and *picanterías* (small restaurants selling beer and inexpensive food). Visited by affluent North American and European tourists, the Centro Histórico became the "workplace" of numerous thieves and thus a dangerous place to walk. This situation has been changing since construction has been on the Trole and Ecovía transport systems and the restoration (*rehabilitación*) of the Centro Histórico in

the early 2000s, which includes the re-location of sidewalk vendors and bars as well as police vigilance of the area.

Because of the constant flow of migrants and working-class people in this area, the Centro Histórico of the 1980s became a strategic place for the distribution of *música chicha and música rocolera*, which were sold in small stores and booths located around the Plaza Ipiales, the Plaza Marín, and the Plaza de San Francisco. *Chicha* producers had their headquarters in this area, and wholesale distribution centers of pirated CDs were hidden in offices located in small shopping centers called "*pasajes*" (passageways). In addition, *chicha* and *rocola* concerts were organized in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo, a basketball court located at the entrance of the Plaza Marín. Most importantly, street vendors played *música chicha* on loudspeakers, giving the Centro Histórico a peculiar soundscape that reminded visitors of the migrant presence in the capital.

I constantly experienced this "reminding" while I was consulting the Archivo Histórico of the Banco Central del Ecuador, even though the reading room, located in the second floor of the building, did not have windows facing the streets. A pirate CD vendor had his booth situated at the side of the building's entrance and played music at high volume in order to attract customers. Paraphrasing Lavie and Swedenburg in their study of displacement and geographies of identities, the soundscape of *música chicha* in the Centro Histórico

reminded the elites that "the 'savage' is no longer out 'there' [the rural area] but has invaded the 'home' Here [the heart of Quito] and has fissured it in the process" (Lavie and Swedenburg 1996: 2). The popularity of *música chicha* in the 1990s and early 2000s reflects how lower-class Ecuadorians have decentered the Center and how they are changing commonly-held notions of *música nacional* as well as their view of themselves as citizens of the nation.

The presence of the "Other" was not only audible in the Centro Histórico, but also in upper-middle-class households where domestic servants, usually indigenous women, listened to *música chicha* on the radio while performing chores in the kitchen. Depending on the drivers' musical taste, *música chicha* was frequently listened to on taxis and buses, bringing discomfort to passengers who do not like it. Once I took a taxi to return to my place after an EPM concert late in the evening. The taxi driver, who was a *chicha* fan, mentioned that sometimes he had passengers who asked him to change the radio station, or to turn the radio off, during the ride. Gradually, *música chicha* has invaded both private and public spaces, des-homogenizing and reminding upper-middle-class Ecuadorians of the multiethnic configuration of the Ecuadorian population.

BACKGROUND

Defining *música chicha* in Ecuador is complex because it is a label that references all types of musics associated with "Indianness" and is considered low class. In other words, Ecuadorian music not falling into the category of *música nacional* or *música rocolera* is considered *chicha*. It encompasses modernized renditions of *sanjuanitos*, *pasacalles*, and *yumbos*, as well as Afro-Ecuadorian *bombas* from the Chota Valley and Peruvian *huaynos* recorded by Ecuadorian singers. While Peruvian *música chicha* has been studied to great extent by ethnomusicologists and social scientists (Turino 1988, Hurtado 1995, Romero 2002, Quispe 2002), its Ecuadorian counterpart still awaits scholarly attention. The neglect is partly due to the fact that *música chicha* is often considered a subcategory of *música rocolera*, or a translocation of Peruvian *música chicha*, rather than a style with its own musical features**.**

Música chicha emerged in Peru in the late 1960s as an expression of the second generation of Andean migrants (Turino 1988). It blossomed in the early 1980s with the emergence of numerous *chicha* bands, and became a pan-regional expression identifying Andean migrants in Lima. Its name derives from the word *chicha*, a fermented corn beer consumed at indigenous festivals. Peruvian scholars suggest that the name was adopted from the title of a hit song from the 1960s, "La chichera" (Chicha seller), from the Junin band "Los Demonios del Mantaro" (Hurtado 1995).

Also known as *cumbia andina* or *música tropical andina*, *música chicha* combines the melodic structure of the *huayno* with the rhythmic pattern of the *cumbia* and the sounds of electronic instruments. *Chicha* bands include lead and rhythm electric guitars, electric bass, electric organ (or synthesizer), a drum set, Caribbean percussion (timbales, *güiro*, conga, cow-bell), and one or more lead vocalists (Turino 1988). A signature of Peruvian *música chicha* is the sound of electric guitars playing the lead melody, with lyrics that usually revolve around love themes and topics related to the experiences of displacement. One important characteristic of *música chicha* is that it opened new venues of socialization for unmarried men and women through the organization of social dances in locales called *chichódromos*, parking lots and other places used for *chicha* events (Romero 2002).

Although Ecuadorian and Peruvian *música chicha* share a common origin and namesake, they have different sounds and different meanings in each country. Andean migrants in Lima created a modern urban form that articulated their new social identity, distancing themselves from images of "Indianness." In Ecuador, however, *chicha* singers since the late 1990s have accentuated their indigenous identity by singing in Quichua and by wearing indigenous clothes such as hats, vests, and *ponchos*. While Peruvian *chicha* modernized the *huayno*, Ecuadorian *chicha* has re-popularized the *sanjuanito* and the *yumbo*. Electric guitar sounds

typify *música chicha* in Peru, whereas Ecuadorian *música chicha* is characterized by synthesizers and electronic percussion.

THE SANJUANITO

Although *música chicha* comprises various musical genres of indigenous and *mestizo* origin, it is *sanjuanito* music that best represents it. Widely known throughout the highland region, the *sanjuanito* is the quintessential symbol of indigenous culture. As a result, the *sanjuanito* is synonymous of *música chicha*, as much as the *pasillo* is synonymous of *música nacional*. In contrast to the *pasillo*, whose origin and evolution have been topics of constant debate among elite intellectuals, the *sanjuanito*, as a *música nacional* genre, has received little attention. This is probably due to their scarce interest in the lives and cultures of "real" indigenous people, as colonial chronicles and textbooks reveal (see Chapter 1).

In general, indigenous festivals have been studied as sites of identity affirmation and arenas for social struggle and negotiation (Wibbelsman 1997). They involve a series of rituals—the use of masks, purification baths, ritual fights, consumption of *chicha*, music and dance—with which indigenous people are able to turn upside down the existing social order symbolically (Bakhtin 1984). Anthropologists have studied the Inti-Raymi festival in the province of Imbabura, which coincides with the Catholic celebration of Saint John's Day in June

(Wibbelsman 1997, Botero 1991). In this weeklong festival, indigenous people thank *Pachamama* for the blessings received in the harvest with music. The *sanjuanito* plays a crucial role in providing musical context for the ritual performance.

As with many indigenous musical expressions in Ecuador, it is problematic to make generalizations about the *sanjuanito* genre because there are multiple lyrical variations, instrumental ensembles, and performance contexts, even among communities located next to each other. Overall, there are two types of *sanjuanito*—the indigenous *sanjuanito* and the *sanjuanito mestizo*, also known as *sanjuán de blancos* (*sanjuán* of white people). Both types diverge in musical structure, functions, and social context. The indigenous *sanjuanito* is basically an instrumental piece in duple meter, which is performed in the ritual context by two *pitus* (horizontal flutes), regarded as male and female instruments according to the dualism of the Andean cosmovision. Musicians play short heterophonic melodies that are repeated with slight variations to the accompaniment of a *bombo* (Indian drum). They play in the center of a circle, while participants dance around them following the steady beats. By contrast, the *sanjuanito mestizo* has a more elaborate instrumentation, which includes a combination of guitar, accordion, violin, and/or flute. All melodic instruments usually play the same tune in unison and the harmonization is based on simple chord progressions (I-V-I) played by the

guitar. This type of *sanjuanito* normally includes Spanish and/or Quichua lyrics about love and pride for their rural communities.

Different instrumental ensembles play *sanjuanito* in other contexts. Popular throughout the highland region, *bandas de pueblo* (brass bands) provide music on the occasion of patron saint processions. In the area of Cotacachi, the *sanjuan* is played on an indigenous harp without pedals, often referred to as a diatonic harp because it is tuned to one particular scale (Schechter 1992). In the Chota Valley, the *conjunto de bomba*, formed by a *bomba* (two-headed drum), guitars, and *requinto*, play *sanjuanes* in various secular contexts. The *banda mocha*, a *sui generis* ensemble made up of guitars, drums, orange leaves and gourd instruments, often play *sanjuanitos* in similar contexts. Pan-Andean ensembles perform stylized renditions of *sanjuanitos* with *charango*, *zampoñas*, *rondador*, and *bombos* in regional, national, and international contexts.

Both indigenous people and professional groups dance folk versions of *sanjuanitos* such as the well known "*baile de cintas*" (ribbon dance). The choreography consists of dancing around a large stick with colorful ribbons hanging from it. Each participant holds one ribbon in the hand and dances in such a way that the whole group ends up weaving the ribbons in a colorful braid, and then moves in the opposite direction to reverse weave back to the original position. Despite the variety of instrumentation and performance contexts—

ritual/secular, rural/urban, or regional/national/international—the *sanjuanito* points to Ecuadorian indigenous people as no other *música nacional* genre does.

It is noteworthy that the *sanjuanito* did enter the *música nacional* anthology; however, it never represented the elites' aesthetic values in spite of the "cleansing" of the lyrics and musical arrangements. Its inclusion responded more to an idealization of the *folk*, i.e. the "archaelogical" Indian, as the essence of the Ecuadorian nationality, and to a Latin-American-wide nationalist trend in the first half of the twentieth century which looked to folk music as the basis for a nationalist art music. How were the nineteenth-century *sanjuanitos* known in the urban areas? Were they significantly different from the *sanjuanitos mestizos* performed in Saint John's festivities?

The only written sources of *sanjuanitos* that have survived to this date are a few transcriptions for piano and military band from the late nineteenth century. Juan Agustín Guerrero, a composer and visual artist, compiled a collection of indigenous melodies for Marcos Jiménez de la Espada, a Spaniard researcher who presented this repertoire in the International Congress of Americanists in 1881.[49] The collection was published as *yaravíes*, a generic term probably given by Jiménez de la Espada to all types of Ecuadorian indigenous music from both the highland and coastal regions. It included one *sanjuanito* that Guerrero heard in Otavalo, a small town known for its indigenous entrepreneurs and hand-made

[49] Guerrero, Pablo, ed. 1993.*Yaravíes Quiteños. Música ecuatoriana del siglo XIX*. 2a. edición.

textiles situated to the north of Quito. The transcription shows the typical *sanjuanito* rhythmic pattern of four sixteenth notes followed by two eighth notes as well as a harmonic progression (vi-iii-V-i) in the minor mode, typical of most Ecuadorian music.

A second source of transcriptions is the Fondo Musical Vaca, a large archive of military band music from the first half of the twentieth century, which includes a series of *sanjuanito* band scores. José Miguel Vaca Flores, a conductor who worked in different military bases throughout the country, compiled this impressive collection of more than 70,000 pages. The considerable number of *sanjuanito* scores suggests that this music was frequently performed in open-air venues. This quantity of *sanjuanitos*, however, is significantly smaller than the hundreds of *pasillo* scores found in the same collection, which indicates that the *sanjuanito* was less popular than the *pasillo*, at least in urban centers where the *retretas* took place.

The lack of *sanjuanito* recordings from the early twentieth century is also symptomatic of the scarce popularity of this genre among the upper-middle-classes. No *sanjuanito* recordings are found in the collection of 78-rpm records manufactured by Victor and Columbia Records in the early 1910s. These companies may have believed the music would not sell well. Apparently, neither did Antenor Encalada, the Ecuadorian entrepreneur who first recorded Ecuadorian

music, since there are no *sanjuanito* recordings among the 278 songs that his company released in 1912.

Although the *sanjuanito* has been a pervasive music throughout the highland region and throughout the twentieth century, little is known about its evolution and reception as an urban music, or how it entered the *música nacional* anthology. In a similar vein, little is known about the production and consumption of *música chicha* in the 1ate 1970s and 1980s. Small music companies were forced to close their doors with the invasion of music piracy, and those who are still in the market were not careful in keeping sale records, or have been reticent to speak about them. Thus, I have relied heavily on oral histories that *chicha* composers and performers have shared with me.

ORIGIN OF *MÚSICA CHICHA* IN ECUADOR

According to composers Naldo Campos and Ricardo Realpe, before the 1970s the term *música chicha* was relatively unknown in Ecuador. *Sanjuanitos* recorded before the 1970s were arranged for acoustic guitars, following not only a common performance practice of the period, but also the economic interests of national record companies in keeping production costs as low as possible.

> "When I started recording Ecuadorian music, arrangements were basically with guitars and, if possible, accordion. I considered this instrumentation to be poor. I tried to stage a revolution. At my

> young age [15], I realized that something was missing. When I turned 18, I began to direct my own recordings and had the opportunity to make innovations, but I had problems with the record companies because they did not want to increase production costs. There were restrictions: only three instruments. Sometimes I added a *requinto* and did not charge for it… I began incorporating the saxophone, but no percussion. This was prohibited [additional cost]… (personal interview 2001).

Campos recalled that in the late 1970s, "Ecuadorian music did have some percussion, but it was almost unnoticeable. A drum roll (*redoblante*) and a light cymbal (*platillito*) were added here and there. It sounded like an unsophisticated thing [*cosita pueblerina*]." Campos introduced light percussion and blended the rhythms of the Colombian *cumbia* and *paseito* with the melodies of *sanjuanitos* and *pasacalles*. With the advent of the synthesizer, he introduced electronic percussion and a variety of organ-like timbres. Despite these changes, this type of *sanjuanito* was not yet associated with *música chicha* and was still listened to by middle-class Ecuadorians.

"Por una guambrita" (For a Beautiful Indigenous Girl), recorded in the early 1960s by Fresia Saavedra and Carlos Rubira Infante, is an example of this type of *sanjuanito*.[50] The lyrics tell a story of misunderstandings between an indigenous man and woman who approach a civil authority in order to solve their conjugal problem. The woman complains because her husband does not sleep

50 Fresia Saavedra and Carlos Rubira Infante were among the first *música nacional* singers to record Ecuadorian music for Ifesa, the Ecuadorian record company.

with her; the man acknowledges he cannot live without her. The song ends with their reconciliation when both realize they love each other. The terms "*guambrita*" and "*longuita*" are diminutive forms of the Quichua words "*guambra*" (indigenous woman) and "*longa*" (an expression of affection for an indigenous woman, when used by indigenous people).

Por una guambrita me encuentro aquí
Si ella no me quiere no sé que haré
Yo sé que algún día será mi amor
Y si será firme como soy yo.

Señor Comisario, justicia le pido
Que este mi marido no duerme conmigo.
Señor Intendente, esta mujer miente
Yo duermo con ella y ella no me siente

Ay longuita quiéreme así
Ay longuito yo te querré
Ay longuita no seas así
Ay longuito yo te querré
Si nos queremos vamos de aquí

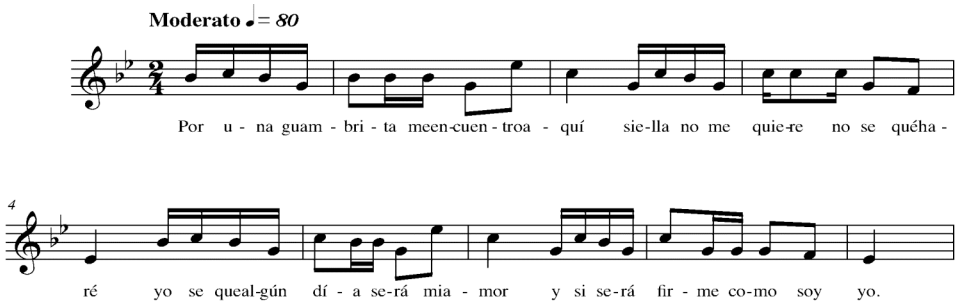
For an indigenous girl I am here
If she does not love me, I will not know what to do
I know that some day she will be my love
And if she will be firm as I am.

Mr. Commissioner, I ask justice
Since my husband does not sleep with me
Mr. Intendent, this woman lies
I sleep with her, but she does not feel me.

Ah, dear woman, love me this way
Ah, dear man, I will love you
Ah, dear woman, do not behave like this
Ah, dear woman, I will love you.
If we love each other, let's get out from here.

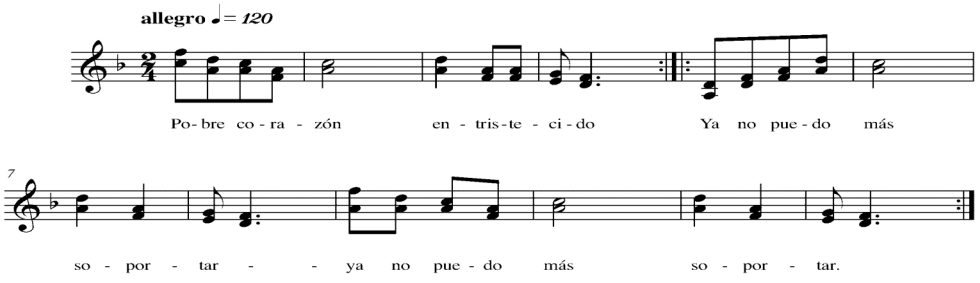
The pentatonic melodies, the inclusion of vocables during the performance, and the typical *sanjuanito mestizo* rhythmic pattern of four sixteenth notes followed by variations of eighth notes point to musical characteristics typical of indigenous music, though "whitened" by the lyrical form (verses set in *coplas*), the guitar accompaniment, and the "polished" singing style of Saavedra and Rubira Infante (see Graphic 2). These artists were *música nacional* singers known for their *pasillo* recordings. This particular rendition includes a *requinto* and a saxophone playing melodic counterpoints and instrumental interludes between the stanzas. It is noteworthy that, although the piece was not considered *música chicha*, music producers categorized it as "*chichero*" (*chicha*-like) for its lyrics. Listen to CD, Example No. 15.

Graphic 2.



"Pobre corazón" (Poor Heart) by Guillermo Garzón is an example of a national *sanjuanito* popular among the elites (see Chapter 2). It is associated with the golden period of *música nacional*, rather than with indigenous people and contexts. Both the lyrics and the musical arrangements distinguish themselves from other types of *sanjuanitos*, such as "Por una guambrita" and "El conejito" (discussed below), in that it conveys a sense of loss and sadness in a style reminiscent of traditional *pasillos*. The man's heart is saddened because he must leave [his girlfriend] and cannot stand the sad farewell. The arrangement of this song is "whitened" with a rhythmic pattern (four eighth notes followed by a half note) that stylizes the *mestizo* version (see Graphic 3). The performance of Trío Los Brillantes in the accompanying CD includes a sophisticated harmonic arrangement for three voices and a guitar-and-*requinto* ensemble, the typical instrumentation of traditional *pasillos*, which links this *sanjuanito* to *música nacional*. Listen to CD, Example No. 4.

Graphic 3.



For Ricardo Realpe, the term *música chicha* points to the emergence of *sanjuanitos* performed by music bands, following the model established by Peruvian *chicha* bands. Rock Star, a group founded by Jaime Toaza in the early 1970s, pioneered this trend. According to Realpe, Toaza arranged *sanjuanitos* with a particular timbre from the Yamaha 270 organ, which was "loud [*chillón*], screaming, but at the same time, sweet and bitter" (personal interview). Soon afterwards, other *chicha* bands adopted this timbre, which according to Realpe, gives Ecuadorian *música chicha* its peculiar sound.

Rock Star popularized a tropical version of the *fox incaico* "Collar de Lágrimas" (Necklace of Tears) by Segundo Bautista, who composed this song in 1958 out of nostalgia for his homeland when he first left Ecuador on a concert trip. It became a hit in Ecuador and, soon afterwards, entered the selected repertoire of the *música nacional* anthology. Interestingly, while the original version played with guitar and *requinto* is regarded as *música nacional*, the modern dance rendition with electronic instruments is considered *música chicha*. This perception stems from the fact that *chicha* bands performed this song in medleys of modern *sanjuanitos*. Rock Star changed its tempo and character into an energetic and fast-tempo dance, and became the Ecuadorian migrants' hymn because the lyrics chronicle the story of thousands of Ecuadorians who have left their homeland, their mothers, and their sweethearts. Despite its sad lyrics about

leaving one's homeland and loved ones, lower-class Ecuadorians enjoy this song because they can temporarily forget their sorrows by dancing. Listen to CD, Example No. 16.

Así sera mi destino, partir lleno de dolor
Llorando lejos de mi patria,
Lejos de mi madre y de mi amor.

Collar de lágrimas dejo en tus manos
Y en el pañuelito consérvalo mi bien.

En las lejanías será mi patria,
Que con mis canciones recordaré.

A mi madre santa le pido al cielo
Me conceda siempre la bendición.

This will be my destiny, to leave filled with pain
Weeping far from my homeland
Far from my mother, and from my love.

A necklace of tears I leave in your hands
And in the small handkerchief keep it safe my love

In the distance will be my homeland
That I remember with my songs.

To my saintly mother I pray to heaven
May she always grant me her blessing.

Rather than being flattered by the success of his song, Segundo Bautista was upset and rejected the dance version performed by *chicha* bands. He disapproves of the modern version because he feels his music has been distorted

and does not express the sentiments he felt when he composed the song. In addition, he does not receive any copyright fees from the new version (personal interview, 2004). Unlike Los Jokers' tropical rendition of "La bocina," which was regarded as tropical music and danced to by upper-middle-class Ecuadorians in the 1970s, Rock Star's arrangement of "Collar de lágrimas" was considered *música chicha* from the outset due to the ethnic and class background of its performers and listeners. Listen to CD, Example No. 17.

In 2002, I first listened to a *chicha* version of "Collar de lágrimas" in an EPM concert organized by Radio Presidente, the taxi drivers' radio station, on Valentine's Day. The concert took place at the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo. Most people danced happily to the song; however, I noticed that some individuals were crying bitterly and inconsolably, and a few were lying unconscious on the seats after drinking. It was obvious that the song was especially meaningful and aroused different emotional responses. As I observed in Madrid, Ecuadorian migrants experience similar feelings when they listen to this song because, as one interviewee mentioned, it truly expresses the nostalgia they feel for their lives in Ecuador.

Ecuadorians within and outside the country often employed the word "suffering" to depict their experiences and emotions. Unlike the "suffering" of *pasillos* and *música rocolera*, which upper-middle-class Ecuadorians refer to as

"singing with the sentiment," the "suffering" in "Collar de lágrimas" was suited for dancing, thus showing a different reaction to the loss and sadness characteristic of *música nacional*. Several interviewees stated that listening to *pasillos* and *música rocolera* encouraged them to drink and to "cut their veins"; however, *música chicha* boosted their spirits.

Sentiments of loss have been a pervasive leitmotif in all types of Ecuadorian music discussed in this work. For upper-middle-class intellectuals, the traditional *pasillo* points to a loss of woman's love, loss of a mother, loss of political power, and loss of identity. *Música rocolera* and *música chicha* are said to express feelings of loss caused by economic hardship and rural-to-urban migration. In a similar vein, the *tecnocumbia* describes loss of the homeland and loved ones in the context of international migration to Europe and the United States (See Chapter 6). Why do Ecuadorians from all social classes identify themselves with feelings of loss, and why do they raise these sentiments as emblematic features of national identity? The answers to these questions, which are beyond the scope of this work, are complex and require digging into the colonial past in order to find the origins of this "pathological self."

MÚSICA CHICHA IN THE 1990s

Producciones Calle released the first recordings of modern *sanjuanitos*; however, Producciones Zapata launched *música chicha* and fthe irst *chicha* stars at the national level. Lola Zapata, a *mestizo* woman who worked for Producciones Calle for several years, opened her own music store in 1970 and started producing *música chicha* in 1986. She promoted two kinds of *chicha* performances. The first includes *chicha* bands, such as Rock Star; the second includes solo singers like Azucena Aymara and María de los Ángeles, who became *tecnocumbia* stars in the early 2000s. Zapata is known among musicians for having a sixth sense for *chicha* hits. Her strategy consists of recycling old *chicha* songs with modern arrangements that the younger generations regard as new. The *sanjuanitos* "Corazón de chancho" (Pork's Heart) and "El conejito" (The Little Rabbit) are examples of successful recycles.

Los Conquistadores, an indigenous/*mestizo* group from the mid-highland city of Ambato, released these songs in the late 1990s. I observed their performances several times in 2002 and 2003. A singer and three dancers formed the group. The singer sang in Spanish, albeit with a heavy Quichua accent that revealed his indigenous background. The dance choreography included vigorous movements, simulating a sort of aerobic exercises, across the stage. The success of these songs was partly due to the lyrics, which included sexual double

entendres. “Corazón de chancho,” for example, points to a woman’s lover who is caught in bed by the woman’s husband.

“Corazón de chancho”
Mi vecina es muy buena, ella me llama calladito
venga acá pues vecinito, hoy no está mi maridito

Cuando llegó su marido yo no sabía que hacer
cuando me encontró comiendo el chancho de su mujer.”

My neighbor is very nice, she calls me silently
Come here my dear neighbor, today my husband is not here.

When her husband arrived, I did not know what to do
When he found me eating his wife’s pork.

“El conejito” employs a rabbit figure to tell the story of a man who comes to visit a woman at midnight and jumps into her bed without trousers looking for sex. To attract the audience, Los Conquistadores dressed in outfits with a rabbit’s ears and tail (see Figure 14). In other songs, they showed sophistication and modernity by using bright and colorful long coats, resembling the dress of Juan Luis Guerra, the famous Dominican singer who popularized the *merengue* and the *bachata* at the international level. *Chicha* bands performed these songs at a faster tempo, thus emphasizing its dance function; however, Los Conquistadores sang their repertoire to the accompaniment of recorded tapes. Listen to CD, Example No. 18.

"El conejito"
Ay mi conejito era tan vanidón, ay caramba
Subiendo a la cama no quiso bajar, ay caramba
A la media noche llegó sin calzón, ay caramba.

Ay, my rabbit was so vain, ay caramba
Jumping to the bed, he did not want to get down, ay caramba
At midnight he came in without trousers, ay caramba

Figure 14. Los Conquistadores. Source: Photograph by the author.

Both *música nacional* and *música rocolera* artists condemned this piece for its vulgar lyrics. Popular singer Teresita Andrade, for example, refused to sing this type of songs in her shows. When Ecuadorians in New York asked her to sing "El conejito," she replied, "I do not sing to animals but to my beloved people." Andrade realized she was having the same negative reaction to *música chicha* that *música nacional* artists had had when *música rocolera* emerged in the 1970s.

Upper-middle-class audiences, especially the younger generations, also disapproved of this type of song; however, many interviewees acknowledged having watched occasionally a popular television program among the working classes, "Diez sobre Diez," just for fun (See Chapter 6). The lyrics as well as the body gestures and the clothing of the singers were the subject of mockery because they were considered rudimentary and tasteless. Furthermore, the production quality of the videos lacked the sophistication and technology of MTV video clips.

Despite such critiques, *música chicha* fans reacted enthusiastically to "El conejito" and other *chicha* songs. This was observed in the sudden warming-up of the concert atmosphere every time a *chicha* singer or chicha band performed them.

NEW WAVES FOR *MÚSICA CHICHA*

In the late 1990s, *música chicha* became a massive musical movement with the rise of two charismatic singers of Quichua descent: Ángel Guaraca, a native from the mid-highland city of Riobamba, and Bayronn Caicedo, a native from the oriental province of Pastaza. Unlike Los Conquistadores and Rock Star, Caicedo and Guaraca did not recycle old songs but created a new *música chicha* repertoire of *sanjuanitos* and *yumbos*, which they sang in both Spanish and

Quichua. Following the *tecnocumbia* performance style, Guaraca and Caicedo sang to the accompaniment of *pistas*, though they never included dancers in their presentations. Their voices are devoid of the sobbing singing style that characterizes most *música nacional* and *música rocolera* artists. They travel extensively to the United States and Europe, attracting more audiences than *música nacional*, *música rocolera*, and *tecnocumbia* singers. Despite pirate distribution, their CDs continue to sell out in Ecuador and the United States, thus representing a secure investment for music producers.

Figure 15. Ángel Guaraca.
Photograph by the author.

Ángel Guaraca, who proudly calls himself the "Indio cantor de América" (Indian Singer of America), has modernized the traditional *yumbo*. His followers, mostly Quichua speakers, identify themselves with the *yumbo* performed every year in the context of the Corpus Christi *fiestas*. Guaraca transformed this genre in sound and lyrical content. Unlike the traditional *yumbo*, played in the pipe-and-tabor tradition, Guaraca sings to the accompaniment of *pistas* arranged with electronic and percussion instruments. Unlike the sexual double entendres characteristic of early *chicha* songs, Guaraca's lyrics stress pride for his indigenous culture, his region, and his country.

In "Campesino de mi tierra" (Peasant of my Land), he involves the *poncho* as the symbol of the national culture and constructs images of an indigenous nation. Listen to CD, Example No. 2. He promotes the unity of Ecuadorians living both within and outside the country with phrases he repeats in his performances frequently, such as "Para todos mis compatriotas que están fuera de nuestra patria" (For all my compatriots who are outside of our homeland), or "Desde la provincia del Chimborazo para todo el Ecuador y el mundo" (From the Chimborazo Province to All Ecuador and the World). With these statements, Guaraca is reinforcing the idea of an Ecuadorian nation that is de-territorialized, but united by bonds of affects and recognition of a common origin.

Guaraca projects modernity and the materialization of the dream of financial success. In his presentations, he wears an indigenous hat and velvet woven with indigenous designs. He adds fashionable accessories that modernize his appearance such as black boots and leather gloves with metallic incrustations. He carries his long hair free and wears eyeglasses that give him an intellectual look very different from that of ordinary peasants. The dream of success-come-true is reflected in the popularity of his songs, his interviews on national television, and his multiple concert trips to the United States and Spain, which have brought him wealth. In addition, Guaraca shows high self-esteem on stage when he announces himself as "*la revelación musical del milenio*" (the millenium's musical revelation). He targets his repertoire to an indigenous audience and sings entire songs in Quichua; however, *mestizo* working-class people also identify with his songs.

"Campesino de mi tierra"
Soy campesino de mi tierra, sí señor
Con mucho orgullo cantaré para Ecuador.

Miles descubren la vencida sí señor
Pobres hijos y humildes somos Ecuador.

Este es mi poncho, es la cultura nacional
Angel Guaraca es el vocero del pueblo indio de mi patria.

I am a peasant of my land, yes sir,
With great pride I will sing for Ecuador.

Thousands of people discover the our land, yes my lord
Poor and humble sons we are Ecuador.

This is my *poncho*, the national culture
Ángel Guaraca is the voice of the Indian people of my homeland.

Bayronn Caicedo has a large number of followers. He sold more than forty thousand CDs with his song "Pilas, pilas," an expression meaning "to be smart." Caicedo sings a wide variety of genres—*cumbia*, *sanjuanito*, *danzante*, *yumbo*—with innovative lyrics reflecting all kinds of situations Ecuadorian are experiencing in migration. "El anillo" (The Ring), for example, describes a man who asks his ex-fiancée to return the engagement ring he gave her. The song blends Ecuadorian pentatonic-like melodies with the rhythm of the *paseito*, a Colombian genre of Afro-Colombian origin.

"El anillo"
Devuélveme el anillo que yo te regalé
Ya no debes usarlo, lo nuestro terminó
Ya tienes otro amor, eso no puede ser
Que luzcas en tu mano el anillo que te dí.

Tan solo, tan solo vivo sin tu amor (bis)
Que rápido buscaste quien me reemplace a mí
En cambio solo vivo con mi amigo el dolor.

Return me the ring I gave you
You should not use it any more, our love is ended
You have another love, it is not good
That you carry on your hand the ring I gave you.

So lonely, so lonely I live without your love
How fast you found someone to replace me
In turn, I live lonely with my friend pain.

In "Dos corazones" (Two Hearts), Caicedo tells the story of a man who leaves his family and migrates to Spain with hopes for a better future. Feeling lonely in his country of adoption, he engages in a new relationship but feels guilty for his infidelity. In the song, he tells his wife the truth and asks her forgiveness. Unlike *música rocolera* lyrics, the man does not view himself as a victim of a treacherous woman, but as a man who acknowledges his unfaithfulness and suffers because of the pain he has caused to his wife. Listen to CD, Example No. 19.

"Dos corazones"
(Hablado)
Lo que aquí gano no sirve para vivir
Me voy al extranjero.
Por Dios cuida a esos guaguas
y no me traiciones amor.
Vuelvo pronto. Confía en mí.

(Cantado)
Yo que por bien hacer, darte vida mejor
De ti me ausenté por un tiempo no más.
Pero la soledad me comenzó a afectar
Por falta de calor otra me abrigó.

Por diversión no más cuando todo empezó
Quien iba a imaginar que iba a durar
Perdóname Señor esta infidelidad
Quiero pagar mi error con mi sufrir.

(Spoken)
What I earn here is not enough to live
I am going abroad
Please take care of the children
And do not cheat on me my love.
I will return soon. Trust me.

(Sung)
Because I wanted to give you a better life
I left you only for a while
But solitude began to affect me
Another woman warmed me up when I needed it.

It was only diversion when it began
Who could imagine that it would last
Forgive me my Lord this infidelity
I want to pay my mistake with suffering.

Figure 16. CD jacket. Bayronn Caicedo.

Caicedo released the album "Cojiéndote los calzones" (Taking Your Panties) with a selection of his most popular songs. The album jacket shows the singer in the background of the rainbow colors, the colors of the indigenous flag, which he selected to reinforce his indigenous identity and that of the audience to whom his songs are intended (see Figure 16). Interestingly, although ordinary indigenous people identify with *música chicha*, the indigenous movements have not associated with it, partly because of the stigma this music carries. Indigenous movements are more interested in disseminating indigenous traditional expressions. When Nina Pacari, a bright indigenous intellectual who has held distinct government offices, became the minister of the Foreign Department during the government of President Lucio Gutiérrez, shamanic rituals and traditional music were promoted as indigenous cultural symbols. The indigenous inauguration of President Rafael Correa, which took place one day before the Congress' inauguration on January 15, was celebrated with purification rituals, shamanistic chants, and folk music.

MÚSICA NACIONAL BAILABLE

How people name their music and the music of other social groups reveals how they see themselves and the "Other" within the national context. Labeling is not simply a matter of classifying a cultural form in a vacuum. This action takes

place in particular socio-economic and historical contexts, reflecting the structures of power that exist between those who label and those who are labeled. In the 1920s and 1930s, the dominant classes transmitted their class ideology by emblematizing a specific repertoire of songs as Ecuadorian national music *par excellence*, which they call *música nacional*. They also raised boundaries against subaltern groups by stigmatizing and calling the latter's music derogatory names. *Música rocolera,* for example, points to a working-class music stereotyped as music of bars and brothels. *Música chicha* acquired all the negative attributes linked to indigenous people since the colonial period with labels such as "primitive," "vulgar," and "worthless." The three music labels—*música nacional*, *música rocolera*, and *música chicha*—have acquired different meanings and have become identity markers of the people and the contexts they represent.

What happens when the lower classes appropriate and re-signify the labels that elites have chosen to name their own music? Since the late 1990s, the lower classes have been using the term *música nacional bailable* (danceable national music) to refer to *música chicha*. In this usage, "*música nacional*" refers to Ecuadorian music, while the adjective "*bailable*" qualifies its function and distinguishes it from the upper-middle-class *música nacional*, currently perceived as sad and sentimental music. The label *música nacional* frequently appears on the jacket covers of pirated CDs. Interestingly, I never saw one promoting *música*

chicha per se, though this label was frequently used by Ecuadorians. It is my contention that by appropriating the term *música nacional*, the lower classes symbolically elevate their music as emblematic of the nation, similarly to the way the upper-middle classes heralded the *pasillo* and other folk genres as Ecuadorian national music.

In order to sell their CDs, pirate vendors print pictures of sexy women on the covers, which they download from pornographic websites. One vendor I interviewed stated that men were more inclined to buy CDs with these pictures, rather than pictures of singers, monuments, or landscapes. With such a strategy, pirate vendors project new images of *música nacional bailable*, which never became mainstream. Another strategy is to use special album titles, such as "Música nacional de impacto" (*Música Nacional* of Impact), or "Los duros de la música nacional" (*The X-Men of Música Nacional*), meaning the best singers of Ecuadorian music. See Figures 17, 18, and 19. These names, which appear sporadically on jacket covers, depending on the vendors' taste, have never became as popular as the term *música nacional bailable*.

Figure 17. *Total Mix Nacional*.

Figure 18. *Nacional de impacto.*

Figure 19. *Los duros de la música nacional*.

CONCLUSION

The tropicalization of *música nacional* reflects two distinct approaches to modernity, representing different social classes, different ethnic groups, and different historical and economic contexts. *Salsa* and *cumbia* renditions of *música*

nacional in the late 1960s and early 1970s reflected the optimism of upper-middle-class Ecuadorians for a better future in a period of bonanza and modernization. Conversely, the emergence of *música chicha* in the late 1970s and 1980s represented rural migrants' cultural response to the same phenomenon, as well as their adaptation to new urban contexts. Unable to work their lands productively, they were forced to migrate to the city to earn a living as street vendors, domestic servants, or construction workers. Overtime, *música chicha* also came to represent the anxiety of upper-middle class Ecuadorians, who saw the indigenous "Other" on the periphery invading the center, thus de-homogenizing and racializing the Ecuadorian nation.

The focus on a brave "archaelogical" Indian as the origin of the Ecuadorian nation, and the belief that the "essence" of a nation is in its *folk*, compelled nationalist composers of the early twentieth century to adopt pre-Inca musical genres like the *sanjuanito* and the *yumbo* as the basis for Ecuadorian art music. These genres in their traditional format, however, were rejected and pejoratively labeled *música chicha,* when composed, performed, and listened to by contemporary indigenous and *mestizo* people.

In his study of hybrid cultures, García Canclini analyzes various ways in which Latin American people enter and exit modernity (García Canclini 1992). This notion lies at the backdrop of Romero's study of music making in the

Mantaro Valley as well (Romero 2001). He argues that indigenous people keep playing their traditional music in indigenous festivals; however, they listen and dance to *música chicha* in urban contexts. There is no contradiction in these apparently opposed musical practices because, although both types of music have different functions, contexts and meanings, they both share a common origin, as the example of the rural *huayno* and Peruvian *música chicha* illustrates. In a similar vein, *música chicha* singers in Ecuador have innovated and modernized the *sanjuanito* and the *yumbo* without breaking with traditional forms of these genres. In the Saint John's Day festival they sing *sanjuanitos mestizos*; however, they dance happily to "El conejito" in the context of EPM concerts organized on weekend days in Quito.

Tradition and modernity are often thought of as binary oppositions challenging notions of "authenticity" and continuity. However, they are not necessarily opposed to each other. By modernizing *sanjuanitos* and *yumbos* with electronic instruments and new lyrics alluding to current experiences, lower-class Ecuadorians are showing not only their ability to innovate traditional music, but also their agency in ensuring continuity of their musical traditions in the context of globalization.

CHAPTER 6

THE *TECNOCUMBIA* BOOM IN ECUADOR

My first visits to the Historical Center of Quito in December 2001 were marked by the sound of *tecnocumbias* in the streets and on metropolitan buses. Street vendors located at the corners of the old and busy Plaza de San Francisco, Plaza Marín, and Plaza Ipiales played pirated CDs of *tecnocumbia* in their improvised booths. Pedestrians seemed to be accustomed to the high volume of the loudspeakers and many stopped to buy CDs for one dollar. The song "Me abandonaste" (You Abandoned Me), sung by María de los Ángeles, one of the most popular *tecnocumbia* singers, was the hit of the moment. It had a "catchy" melody and strong beat pulsations reminiscent of disco music. The lyrics talked about a great love that disappeared, leaving the partner in deep pain. I frequently listened to this song on the radio as well as at numerous concerts of Ecuadorian popular music (EPM) I attended in 2002. The following year, however, the song was rarely heard, vanishing as fast as it came. I was not acquainted with the *tecnocumbia* because this music was unknown in Ecuador in the summer of 1999 when I conducted pre-dissertation research.

The economic crisis and the massive exodus of Ecuadorians in the late 1990s produced profound changes in the production, consumption, and dissemination of EPM. One of these changes was the sudden boom of the Peruvian *tecnocumbia* in Ecuador, which resulted in massive concerts of this music in coliseums and bullfighting plazas in Quito. These concerts brought together thousands of lower-class Ecuadorians whose relatives had left the country for better opportunities. Other changes included the proliferation of grassroots recording produced by Ecuadorian singers and the emergence of new radio and television programs devoted to the promotion of Ecuadorian singers.

While the *tecnocumbia* was widely listened to among the working-class population, it took some time to penetrate the mainstream media. The untimely death of Thanya Paredes Aymara, a beloved singer in her early twenties and member of a family of musicians known as the "Aymara Dynasty,"[51] drew attention to the *tecnocumbia* in newspaper headlines. Thanya died in a car accident in September 2001 when she and her husband were driving from Quito to a presentation in Cuenca, a southern highland city located six hours away from Quito. Intrigued by the reaction of more than two thousand people who attended her funeral, journalists began investigating the origin and development of the *tecnocumbia* in Ecuador. Newspaper headlines such as "La tecnocumbia desplaza

[51] A family formed by several nationally known singers including Azucena Aymara (Thanya's mother), Jaime Enrique Aymara (uncle), Gustavo Aymara (uncle), and Tamara Aymara (cousin).

a la rockola"[52] (The *Tecnocumbia* Displaces the *Rocola*) and "Tecnocumbia: la decepción con ritmo bailable"[53] (*Tecnocumbia*: Deception with Danceable Rhythm) reflected the journalists' outlook on this musical phenomenon.

The ubiquity of the *tecnocumbia* became the center of debate on national television. In 2002, *Este Lunes* (This Monday), a highly respected television program, organized a panel with *tecnocumbia* singers, sociologists, and journalists to talk about the standing of *música nacional,* i.e. the *pasillo,* in relation to the *tecnocumbia* boom. Two Sunday television magazines—*La Televisión* and *Día a Día*—presented extended interviews with *tecnocumbia* singers, who were introduced as the new generation of Ecuadorian singers.[54] They suddenly became the center of attention in the mainstream media, even though they had been in the music business for many years and had previously been ignored.

By the same token, the *tecnocumbia* boom focused the attention of popular culture advocates in Quito, to such an extent that in 2003 the Museo de la Ciudad organized a series of concerts and exhibits aiming to insert the daily cultural expressions of the "people" into the museum space. With the exception of Hipatia Balseca, the *tecnocumbia* singer, all the musicians and artists involved in the concert/exhibit were outsiders to the *tecnocumbia* phenomenon who used

[52] *El Comercio*, August 19, 2001.
[53] *El Comercio,* August 20, 2001.
[54] Widinson was interviewed in *La Televisión*. Jaime Enrique Aymara was interviewed in *Día a Día*.

tecnocumbia melodies, images, and lyrics as raw material for their works.[55] As a result, their presentations had more to do with kitsch representations than with the *tecnocumbia* itself or its listeners.

This chapter explores how lower-class Ecuadorians have appropriated and re-signified a foreign music as their own. By examining the production, consumption, and dissemination networks of the *tecnocumbia,* I analyze the processes by which this music entered the group of stigmatized EPM genres. In addition, I explore ongoing discourses among intellectuals regarding the lack of originality and professionalism of Ecuadorian working-class musicians, and point to the central role such singers play as signifiers of "Ecuadorianness." I argue that the *tecnocumbia* gives continuity to pervasive themes characteristic of *música nacional* and *música rocolera,* such as sentiments of loss, uprootedness, and nostalgia, albeit conceived as dance music.

ORIGIN OF THE *TECNOCUMBIA* IN ECUADOR

Raúl Romero (2002) and Arturo Quispe (2002) have studied the *tecnocumbia* phenomenon in Peru and regard this expression as a third wave of *música chicha.* According to these scholars, in the beginning the *tecnocumbia* was not associated with Andean *música chicha* because it originated in the Amazon

[55] The rock band "La Grupa" composed new songs in the style of the *tecnocumbia*. Miguel Alvear presented a photograph exhibit, while Jorge Espinosa wrote verses alluding to *tecnocumbia's* typical contexts.

region and was perceived as an international type of *música tropical.* Several factors reinforced this perception: the sound of keyboard and organ (atypical for *música chicha*), the absence of Andean melodies, the happy character of the music, and the presence of female singers dancing with exotic outfits and sensual movements. In addition, the raspy voice of Rosy War, the leading *tecnocumbia* star, reminded listeners of the performances of international Mexican artist Ana Gabriel. Devoid of musical and extra-musical features that point to the Andean migrants, all social classes immediately accepted the *tecnocumbia.*

According to Quispe, the *tecnocumbia* became associated with *música chicha* when *chicha* bands started fusing their old repertoire with the sound and images of *tecnocumbia.* Los Shapis, the most popular *chicha* band in the 1980s, renovated the group's image with the incorporation of two female dancers dressed in *tecnocumbia* outfits (short dresses and long boots). Furthermore, *tecnocumbia* bands used the same production and dissemination networks employed by *chicha* bands. Peruvian entrepreneurs organized *tecnocumbia* concerts in *chichódromos* and radio stations devoted to *música chicha* aired *tecnocumbias* in their daily programs.

Unlike Peru, the *tecnocumbia* in Ecuador is not linked to *música chicha* but rather perceived as foreign music.[56] Most *tecnocumbias* known in Ecuador are

[56] As seen in Chapter 5, lower-class Ecuadorians associate *música chicha* with the modernization of Ecuadorian musical genres, rather than with Peruvian *música chicha* and *tecnocumbia*.

covers of Peruvian *tecnocumbias,* or modern arrangements of non-Ecuadorian musical genres such as *baladas, boleros,* and pop music. The modernization consists of introducing electronic instruments and the *cumbia* rhythms into old popular songs. Thanya Paredes Aymara, for example, became famous with a *cumbia* rendition of the *balada* "Yo soy rebelde" (I Am a Rebel), a 1970 hit song originally recorded by the Spanish singer Jeannette. Silvana, a singer elected to Congress in 2003, also popularized the *balada* "A las puertas del cielo" (At Heaven's Doors) in a *cumbia* version.

The *tecnocumbia* was first introduced in Ecuador in 1999 by Widinson, a little-known *música rocolera* singer from Quito, and Sharon, a young woman from Guayaquil who promoted herself as a sensual singer (personal interview with Lola Zapata). Other highland singers of *música rocolera* and *música chicha,* such as Jaime Enrique Aymara, Azucena Aymara, María de los Ángeles, and Gerardo Morán switched to the *tecnocumbia* and became prominent national artists. They all had in common long and unremarkable artistic careers. Gerardo Morán, for example, was in the music business for seventeen years but was barely known in Quito. María de los Ángeles recorded five CDs with *pasillos, boleros,* and *cumbias* before she became famous with the song "Me abandonaste." Azucena Aymara started her career in 1990 recording *huaynos* and *sanjuanitos* for Producciones Zapata with only moderate success.

It is worth noting that regionalism manifests itself in the types of *tecnocumbia* and *tecnocumbia* singers who are popular on the *Costa* and in the *Sierra.* People from Guayaquil perceive the *tecnocumbia* as a type of Colombian *cumbia* rather than as a *cumbia andina;* therefore, any *balada, bolero,* or pop song adapted to *cumbia* rhythm is considered a *tecnocumbia.* By contrast, the working classes in the *Sierra* identify with the Andean flavor of the *cumbia andina* and with highland performers such as Widinson and María de los Ángeles. Consequently *tecnocumbia* singers who are popular in the *Sierra* are relatively unknown in the *Costa,* and vice versa.

According to Romero, the prefix "tecno" in the word *tecnocumbia* has no relation to the "techno" movement originated in Detroit in the late 1970s, known for the use of experimental electronic arrangements (Romero 2002: 231). In Ecuador, however, musicians have introduced a variety of "techno" effects such as repeated samples, delayed echo, and filter effects in remixed songs. These recordings are used to announce the singer's entrance on stage. Aside from this specific practice, *tecnocumbia* singers never perform to the accompaniment of remixed records in live concerts.

In general, they believe that the prefix "tecno" indicates the use of electronic sounds in arrangements of well-known popular songs. Azucena Aymara, for example, asserts that "tecno" points to an innovation of the musical

genre it precedes.[57] Thus, *tecnochicha, tecnocumbia,* and *tecnobachata* are simply *música chicha, cumbias,* and *bachatas* arranged with electronic instruments and performed in a danceable fast tempo. Changes in the timbre and speed of music give listeners an impression of novelty and modernity.

Musical modernity in Latin America results more from the innovation and/or re-fashioning of old musical traditions rather than from a break with the past. As George Yúdice rightly points out: "[it] is more an issue of establishing new relationships with tradition than of leaving it behind"[58] (Yúdice in Handelsman 2005:31, my translation). *Música chicha* and the *tecnocumbia* represent examples of the innovation and adaptation of traditional music—the *huayno*—in the context of urbanization and globalization, respectively. Musicians from the Mantaro Valley, Peru have incorporated two foreign instruments for the Andean culture—the clarinet and the saxophone—in the *orquesta típica,* a wind ensemble accompanying most religious festivals of the region (Romero 2002). Indigenous and *mestizo* people in Quito dance to the happy and modern *sanjuanito* "El conejito." These are examples of how Andean people modernize and adapt their musical practices to new social milieus, securing in this way the continuity of their musical traditions in the younger generations.

[57] Personal interview, 2003.
[58] "Paradógicamente, la modernidad en América Latina es más una cuestión de establecer nuevas relaciones con la tradición que de superarlas".

LACK-OF-ORIGINALITY DISCOURSE

The majority of *tecnocumbias* popular in the highland region are actually covers of Peruvian *tecnocumbias,* especially those performed by Agua Marina and Armonía 10, two tropical orchestras from Piura. *Tecnocumbia* fans are largely unaware of this phenomenon because Peruvian singers and Peruvian recordings are little known in Ecuador. I was also unaware of this fact until I traveled to Lima in February 2004 and became acquainted with a vast discography of Peruvian *tecnocumbia* and *música chicha* from the early 1980s. A song performed by Gerardo Morán, "El aguajal," which Los Shapis released successfully in the early 1980s, was a hit in Ecuador in 2003. Jaime Enrique Aymara recorded "Maldito corazón" (Damned Heart), a song first released by the Argentine group Ráfaga, as well as "Lágrimas de hombre" (A Man's Tears) and "Juraré no amarte más" (I Swear Not to Love You Any More) by Agua Marina and Armonía 10, respectively. Widinson recorded "Tu amor fue una mentira" (Your Love Was a Lie), a hit by Agua Marina in 1999. Hipatia Balseca popularized "El arbolito" (The Little Tree), a song originally released by Grupo Néctar. And the list goes on…

Composers Guido Narváez, Ricardo Realpe, and Marco Vinicio Bedoya have written a few Ecuadorian *tecnocumbias* combining different styles of music with melodies and cadences typical of the Ecuadorian *sanjuanito.* Although the *sanjuanito* indexes *música chicha* (see Chapter 5), Ecuadorian *tecnocumbias* are

not always associated with it because the arrangements include melodies and instrumentation not typical for *música chicha.* Narváez's song "Me abandonaste," for example, combines pentatonic-based melodies with a "catchy" disco beat. Listen to CD, Example No. 20.

The dividing line between *música chicha* and the *tecnocumbia* is not only defined by musical characteristics, but also by extra-musical factors. One example is "Por internet" (By Internet), a song composed by Ricardo Realpe and popularized by Azucena Aymara in 2001. The lyrics allude to a relationship that survives thanks to "a letter or a picture sent with love by internet." Although this song has elements of *salsa* instrumentation (piano and brass instruments), many Ecuadorians regard it as *música chicha* because the song is associated with Ricardo Realpe and Azucena Aymara, the quintessential composer and singer of *música chicha* (see Chapter 5). Listen to CD, Example No. 21.

"Por internet"
Una foto, una carta con mis besos
Te los mando con cariño en internet
Mil recuerdos, mil abrazos, mil caricias
Como prueba de que siempre te amaré.

Por internet, por internet
Todo mi cariño te lo mandaré
Por internet, por internet
Un millón de besos te los mandaré.

Que te llegue a cualquier parte del mundo
A España, a Europa, a Nueva York,
Más de prisa que el mismo pensamiento
Yo te envío mi amor con mucho amor.

A photo, a letter with my kisses
I send them to you with love by internet
A thousand memories, a thousand hugs, a thousand caresses
As proof that I will always love you.

By internet, by internet
All my love I will send to you
By internet, by internet
A million kisses I will send you.

May it reach you in any place in the world
In Spain, Europe, and New York
Faster than the thought
I send to you my love with lots of love.

Ecuadorian singers often point to the lack of new Ecuadorian repertoires as symptomatic of lack of originality, which is conceived as lack of musical identity. *Rocolera* singer Juanita Burbano, for example, recalls that when she recorded her first album in the early 1980s the music producer gave her a large box of Peruvian records from which she had to make a selection of the repertoire she wanted to record. This explains why she became famous for her interpretations of Peruvian *huaynos* and *valses*. Burbano also complains about the lack of creativity in Ecuador and is critical of Ecuadorians who are not familiar

with their dance music. She blames the government and the media for not supporting singers in their attempts to disseminate Ecuadorian music.

> Now our country is, in terms of music, only a copy of other countries...[59] The *tecnocumbia* is in fashion, but it came from Peru, Argentina, and Bolivia. I don't know if you have seen something having been created in Ecuador, something that identifies Ecuador (Juanita Burbano, interview 2003).
>
> When Ecuadorians are at a dance, they ask for *bachata* and they know how to dance *bachata,* but they don't know how to dance Ecuadorian music. This is how [our] identity is getting lost. Why? Because in our country there is not enough support, not enough to have a good television program devoted to Ecuadorian music" (Juanita Burbano, interview 2003).[60]

Música nacional artists point to the lack-of-originality discourse by highlighting their roles as true artists who preserve "the authentic" Ecuadorian music. Journalists endorse this viewpoint by criticizing *tecnocumbia* singers for singing Peruvian songs. On the other hand, *música nacional* followers point to the lack of renovation of Ecuadorian music, in the sense that the new generations listen to the same *pasillo* repertoire and the same singers previous generations had

[59] "Ahora nuestro país es, en cuanto a musica, una copia de los otros países… Las tecnocumbias están de moda en Ecuador, pero eso vino de Argentina, Bolivia y Perú. Y ahora está en Ecuador. No sé si usted ha logrado ver algo que sea realmente creado en Ecuador, algo que identifique a Ecuador."

60 "Los ecuatorianos cuando están en un baile piden bachata y saben como bailar bachata y no saben como bailar la música ecuatoriana. Entonces esa es la identidad que se va perdiendo. Por qué? Porque en nuestro país no hay el apoyo suficiente, no hay los medios suficientes para tener un buen programa de televisión donde se promueva lo ecuatoriano".

listened to in their youth.[61] In fact, my research on the *pasillo* in the mid-1990s started with the false assumption that the *pasillo* was disappearing because there was no new production since the 1980s. This assumption, based on comments and opinions I read in the newspapers and heard myriad times in conversations of upper-middle-class Ecuadorians, was erroneous. There was a significant production of working-class *pasillos,* which upper-middle-class Ecuadorians did not recognize as *pasillos* because of their association with *música rocolera.*

Aside from their lack of originality, detractors criticize the commercial impulses of Ecuadorian singers in their performance selections because they have changed their repertoire continuously during the past decade in response to the latest musical trend. Gerardo Morán, for example, recorded numerous Peruvian *tecnocumbias,* Dominican *bachatas,* and Colombian *cumbias* between 2002 and 2004. Hipatia Balseca, one of the youngest *tecnocumbia* singers from Quito, became famous with a cover of the Dominican *reggaeton* "La colegiala" (The School Girl). Rosita Cajamarca, a popular *chicha* singer in the early 1990s, released in 2004 two video clips in which she sang traditional Peruvian *huaynos* wearing native costumes.

Tecnocumbia singers seem to be little concerned about the "borrowing" and recording of foreign songs without the authors' consent, which explains how

[61] With more than forty years of artistic life, Hermanos Miño-Naranjo and Hermanas Mendoza-Suasti are still actively involved in public performances of *música nacional* concerts.

they are able to release a new CD every year. To avoid local copyright problems, they identify the author's name with the acronym D.R.A., which stands for "derechos reservados de autor" (author's reserved copyrights) on the jacket covers. I learned this from personal experience. Knowing that I was seeking an authors' permission to reproduce several Ecuadorian songs on a CD accompanying an article, a well-known music producer suggested that I use the acronym D.R.A. in lieu of more specific copyright identification. Knowing how bureaucratic and time consuming getting authorization letters in Ecuador could be, she said that it was a safe solution to my problem.

Tecnocumbia singers had their own reasons for singing Peruvian *tecnocumbias* rather than Ecuadorian music. According to them, they simply follow their fans' wishes because they are indebted to them. Gerardo Morán stressed this point:

> One has to be in fashion… If people want *pasillos,* then we record *pasillos;* if people want *boleros,* then we play *boleros*… I have seen that the *tecnocumbia* has a short life span in people's taste, but the public wants to listen to it now, and we are definitely indebted to our people. Their request represents an order for us, what they tell us to do is an obligation[62] (interview, Morán in Santillán 2001).

[62] "Uno tiene que estar de acuerdo a la moda.. Si la gente quiere pasillos le grabamos pasillos, si la gente quiere boleros, pues hacemos boleros…esto de la tecnocumbia yo he visto que tiene muy pcoo tiempo de duración en el gusto de la gente, pero el público quiere ahora escuchar eso y nosotros nos debemos a la gente definitivamente, lo que le público pide es una orden para nosotros, lo que ellos nos dicen, pues es una exigencia para nosotros".

Ecuadorian artists often express a desire "to reach Ecuadorians' hearts," or "to bring happiness to their people." Azucena Aymara, for example, considers her job as an artist to help the public cope with "suffering" produced by economic hardship, breakups, and nostalgia for their country. Although Ecuadorian singers point to "moral obligation" as an important factor affecting their repertoire, commercial concerns play a more decisive role. Ecuadorian singers insist that they must follow the public's demands because otherwise they would be unable to sell their CDs. Patricio Cóndor, a video and music producer, stresses this point: "a singer may have the best musical themes and arrangements in the world, but what happens if the public does not like the songs?" (interview, 2003). María de los Ángeles also commented on the same issue from a singer's perspective:

> Most young people do not valorize our music. I started singing *música nacional.* I sang *yaravíes, tonadas, pasacalles.* I like *pasillos, boleros,* and *valses.* I won contests for music amateurs [of *música nacional*], but we cannot record this music because the public does not buy it" (María de los Ángeles, interview 2003).

Since the *tecnocumbia* boom in the late 1990s, Ecuadorian singers have had more visibility nationally than their predecessors in the late 1970s and 1980s. The creation of a *tecnocumbia* star system and the participation of star singers in live concerts assure a large audience and income for music entrepreneurs. *Tecnocumbia* singers have loyal followers who buy their CDs and watch their

video clips on television. However, as we have seen so far, it is not Ecuadorian music, but Ecuadorian singers who are visible today.

LACK-OF-PROFESSIONALISM DISCOURSE

Tecnocumbias in Peru and Ecuador are quite different in terms of performance practice. Peruvian singers always perform to the accompaniment of live music, while Ecuadorian singers normally sing with *pistas,* or recorded back tracks. In her concert tours within Peru and to other South American countries, Rosy War always traveled with her band (Banda Kaliente). Armonía 10 and Agua Marina, two tropical orchestras founded in the 1970s, innovated the *tecnocumbia* repertoire with arrangements that included brass sections and melodic lines derived from Latin American pop (Romero 2002). In Ecuador, however, *tecnocumbia* singers hire a music arranger to make the *pistas.* Journalist Esteban Michelena contends that Ecuadorians are simply "*karaoke* singers" who perform in front of a live audience instead of in a *karaoke* box (Michelena 2003: 45). Michelena underestimates the value of recorded tapes and neglects the meaningfulness of the interaction between the singers and audience.

While *karaoke* is basically a form of entertainment in which amateur singers perform well-known songs along with recorded music (the "empty orchestra"), the use of *pistas* by Ecuadorian singers does not imply *karaoke* singing. According to Charles Keil (1994: 252), the goal of the *karaoke* singer is

to replicate a particular star singer's style, an idea that is absent in the minds of both Ecuadorian singers and listeners when they attend an EPM concert. Even if this were the case, the original performances to be replicated, i.e. the Peruvian *tecnocumbias,* are unknown in Ecuador. In addition, *tecnocumbia* singers have face-to-face interaction with the public whose members react emotionally by singing, clapping, crying, or dancing to the music. Although the interactions of singers with friends and listeners are also crucial in *karaoke,* the intense emotional response of *tecnocumbia* listeners is not characteristic of *karaoke* contexts.

With regard to the diminished value of recorded music, Jeremy Wallach suggests that "recordings generate a 'sonic presence' that provides a basis for musical sound and meaning just as live performance does" (cit. in Waxer 2002). In her study of *salsa* in the city of Cali, Waxer (2002) illustrates the powerful role of old records in providing a soundscape for the articulation of a *caleño* (from Cali) identity in the context of *viejoteca*s (discotheques where people dance salsa music from 33-rpm records). The use of recorded tapes is essential for hybrid musics such as *Nor-Tec* as well, in which DJs fuse sampled sounds typical of *conjunto* (accordion and *bajo sexto*) and *banda sinaloense* (tuba and trumpet) with *techno* effects like loops, breaks, and synthesizers (Madrid 2003). These

examples demonstrate that people generate meaning regardless of the mediated or live music sound.

Tecnocumbia singers see numerous advantages in using *pistas.* It saves them time and money by not having to hire musicians and deal with the transportation of instruments and amplification equipment. This is particularly important on weekends, when singers have three to four presentations in different locations. Azucena Aymara and María de los Ángeles note:

> I would like to sing with guitars, accordion, bass, and percussion, but this represents lots of expenses, lots of investments. People who organize concerts always try to minimize costs, for this reason I have been forced to work with *pistas*…(Azucena Aymara, interview in Santillán 2001).

> We would not be able to be in other shows if we had to install and disarm the amplification system. We would be talking about four thousand dollars. It is better for us to use *pistas.* We can schedule two, and even three shows… (María de los Ángeles, personal interview 2003).[63]

Other performers, like Gerardo Morán, prefer to sing with *pistas* because all instruments can be heard clearly. In his view, *pistas* not only provide better sound quality, but are also more reliable than having a band

[63] "No alcanzamos llegar a otra presentación, armar y desarmar la ampliación. Hablaríamos de unos cuatro mil dólares. Para nosotros es mucho mas fácil usar pistas. Se puede hacer dos y hasta tres shows".

playing with faulty amplification systems, which jeopardize their performance.

> Now everything is [sung] with *pistas,* sometimes it sounds better because … unfortunately, there is not good sound here and with the *pista* that has the whole orchestra on it, you can hear better. However, it is sad because there are many good musicians that, unfortunately, can only work in the recording studio (Gerardo Morán, interview in Santillán 2001).[64]

Live music performances are rarely seen in Ecuador. On January 13, 2003, Agua Bella, a female *tecnocumbia* group from Peru, made its debut in the Plaza de Toros of Quito, located on Amazonas Avenue. The musical arrangements, the sound equipment, the orchestra, the illumination and overall performance were indeed professional. The show included an announcer, who interacted with the audience and introduced each of Agua Bella's songs. While the announcer is a common figure in Peruvian popular music concerts, in Ecuador there is no such figure. Obviously, Agua Bella was trying to conquer the Ecuadorian public with strategies the group used in their shows in Peru. In Ecuador, however, these strategies seemed out of place. The live music accompaniment did not make Agua Bella's performance more appealing than those of Ecuadorian singers with *pistas.* Agua Bella included a set of popular Ecuadorian songs such as "Avecilla" and the

[64] "Ahora todo es la pista, se escucha mejor porque a veces, lamentablemente no hay muy buenos sonidos acá, y con la pista donde está toda la orquesta se oye muchísimo mejor, pero es penoso porque hay muy buenos musicos que se han preparado mucho y lamentablemente no pueden trabajar más que en grabación nada más…"

bomba "Carpuela" without success. This group did not receive an enthusiastic response from the audience, as Azucena Aymara and Widinson had. As I observed, lower-class Ecuadorians are used to the sounds of *pistas* and the choreography of dancers who replace the physical presence of the orchestra.

Tecnocumbia singers from Peru are not successful in Ecuador, and neither are Ecuadorian singers in Peru.[65] Their singing styles and the social contexts where they perform are simply different. When I went to Lima, I brought CDs of Jaime Enrique Aymara and Gerardo Morán. My goal was to find out how Peruvians would react to the interpretation of Peruvian *tecnocumbias* by Ecuadorian singers. One of my interviewees was Miriam, a 27-year-old friend and a knowledgeable *chicha* fan who had lived in one of the *barrios jóvenes* (shanty towns). She became my "teacher" in *chicha* matters. I met her at her uncle's house in Barranco, the artistic district where renowned Chabuca Granda composed her most popular *valses criollos.* We spent entire afternoons talking about, and watching videos of, *chicha* bands. At that time I was unable to distinguish aurally the differences between a *tecnocumbia* from the coastal, Andean, or Amazon regions. I had read the studies of Turino (1999.), Romero (2002), and Quishpe (2000), and knew the names of the songs and the most popular *chicha* bands; however, I was not acquainted with the actual music. In her own words, Miriam explained to me how she was able to identify the different

[65] *Música rocolera* singer Segundo Rosero is the exception.

regional styles and who the performers were by paying attention to the arrangement and the lyrics. She had the kind of knowledge that only a cultural insider has.

Miriam and her three children lived with her uncle Beto and her aunt Dalila, two siblings I met at the airport when I arrived in Lima. A common friend in Quito introduced us on the phone, and they were very generous to provide me with lodging and food during my stay in Lima. Unlike Miriam, Beto and Dalila were drawn to *creole* music and rural *huaynos.* I could not have found a better place to stay and a better teacher/informant than Miriam. We spent several afternoons and nights together, dancing in *chichódromos* to the north and south of Lima. When she listened to the sample of *tecnocumbias* I brought from Ecuador, she was surprised to hear "El aguajal" of Los Shapis in the voice of Gerardo Morán. Overall, she liked his interpretation but found it quite different from that of Peruvian singers, especially because of the sobbing singing style. Her view was similar to that of other interviewees.

Singing with sobs and with a high-pitched voice is not a random choice on the part of Ecuadorians. In a personal interview, María de los Ángeles revealed the conscious aesthetic decisions she makes to attract fans. Her musical training sets her apart from other *tecnocumbia* singers; she took voice lessons in the National Conservatory of Quito. Married to composer Guido Narváez, María de

los Ángeles takes pride in being the only *tecnocumbia* singer who sings original songs, rather than covers. She commented that she used to sing with a clear voice, but her friends and relatives suggested she sing with a weeping singing style. She realized that her popularity increased when she did so.

The lack-of-professionalism discourse is yet another way in which elites construct alterity vis-à-vis the working-class population. This discourse legitimates *música nacional* and Ecuadorian pop music singers as professional artists because they perform with live music, while *tecnocumbia* singers are deemed non-professionals because they sing with recordings.

A GLANCE AT EPM CONCERTS

Tecnocumbia performances take place in three distinct venues: 1) large concerts organized in *coliseos* and bullfighting arenas for thousands of people, 2) middle-sized-concerts in discotheques, restaurants, or recreational clubs for about four hundred people, and 3) and in private parties celebrating a birthday, a graduation, or a *quinceañera* event. In this section I describe the dynamics of the large concerts, where *tecnocumbia* singers share the stage with *rocola* and *chicha* performers.

While in 2001 only a few EPM concerts were organized in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo, by 2003 they had multiplied and took place in important

musical venues, such as the Ágora of the Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, the Plaza de Toros in Quito, the Estadio Aucas, and the Ciudad Mitad del Mundo. Similar concerts were also organized in small towns located in the suburban areas of Quito like Pifo, Sangolquí, and Tumbaco. EPM concerts became a site of entertainment, offering a wide variety of music for all ages and for all situations. Besides *música rocolera, música chicha,* and *tecnocumbia*, the concerts included *música folklórica* and *música del recuerdo,* a label pointing to a repertoire of *baladas* from the 1960s–1970s currently popular among the lower-class youth. Traditional *pasillos* and other *música nacional* genres were rarely performed in these events.

Performance opportunities for Ecuadorian singers were at a peak with the *tecnocumbia* boom. These performances were reminiscent of the golden period of *música nacional* in the 1960s, with the difference being it was music of the working classes, rather than the upper-middle classes that was being promoted. Unlike *música rocolera* concerts of the 1980s, which started at night and ended in the early morning, these concerts began at noon and ended in the late evening. Because Quito's public transport system is reduced after 9:00 p.m., this change of time was more convenient for the public, who were willing to come in large groups knowing that they had a guaranteed transport to return to their homes. Singers who were beginning their careers usually opened the show, followed by

renowned national artists, who performed in the late afternoon when the *coliseo* was full.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, EPM concerts prior to 2001 were poorly organized. They seldom started on time and intermissions between performances were poorly managed. Many singers arrived late, or stayed too long on the stage, especially when the public requested encores. Frequently, the sound system did not work well, generating angry responses from the public. Concerts became more organized when radio deejays began hosting them. Their function was to entertain the audience while a band was setting up on the stage, as well as to control the time scheduled for each performer.

EPM concerts featured ten to fifteen artists and lasted from six to eight hours. Rather overwhelming, this "marathon" concert format was strategic. According to Patricio Cóndor, an event with numerous artists, each one singing different styles of music, attracted a larger audience than concerts with only two or three renowned performers. The logic behind this strategy was that for one single ticket, people could listen to all their favorite artists. Because they lasted several hours, the public was able to come and go at their convenience.

> [The audience] would not pay three or four dollars to see just a few singers. I would rather buy the CD or DVD and see them at home. The public looks for variety… Gerardo sings five songs, fine. Then Jayak performs… the public cheers, and for one single price they

> see everything…. Ten or fifteen artists are fine (Patricio Cóndor, interview 2003).[66]

When I started my research in 2001, the price of amphitheater seats in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo was three dollars, while the front-stage seats cost five dollars. By the end of 2004, ticket fares had increased more than fifty percent to five and eight dollars respectively. On top of this, people paid resellers one or two extra dollars to avoid the long lines at the box office. Most women in the audience worked as domestic servants with a basic salary ranging from eighty to two hundred dollars a month. Others, like street vendors, did not even have a regular job. How could people with such low salaries afford to attend concerts where they spent about ten percent of their monthly income? In my view, the remittances Ecuadorian migrants sent to their families in Ecuador have given them the economic resources to engage in social activities that support the dissemination of EPM.

The *tecnocumbia* boom promoted family-run businesses. Spouses and family members became the singers' managers and public relation associates. They handled the publicity and contracting for presentations. They were also in charge of changing the *pistas* and checking the playback volume during

[66] "No conviene a promotores ni al público. Para un festival grande no. No pagarían tres o cuatro dólares para ver pocos artistas. Para eso compro el CD o DVD y los veo en casa. El público espera variación… Gerardo canta cinco canciones, listo. Ahora viene Jayak… chiflean, y con un solo precio ve todo. … Diez o quince artistas está muy bien".

presentations as well as driving singers and dancers to the next presentation. The dancers were usually friends and relatives as well, while mothers and spouses selected, and many times sewed, the singers' outfits.

Concert dynamics in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo were peculiar to Quito. Organizers built a temporary stage in the center of the basketball court and placed rows of chairs in front of it, forming a section of close seating. Crossing from the amphitheater section to the stage front was relatively easy because a small door on the corner connected both areas. Fans of different ages, including children and adults, climbed to the stage in the middle of a performance to take pictures of themselves with their beloved singers (see Figure 20). People with camcorders stood close to the stage to film performances, while fans sitting near the stage offered drinks to the singers. These dynamics changed when concerts were organized in the Estadio Aucas, a soccer stadium located in the south of Quito, because the stage was located in the center of the field and far from the audience.

Figure 20. María de los Ángeles on the stage with a young fan. Photograph by the author.

The Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo brought together lower-class Ecuadorians of different backgrounds, united by the shared experience of having family members and loved ones abroad. As in *música rocolera* festivals, people shared their drinks with people sitting around them. The great difference, however, was that they also danced to *música chicha* and the *tecnocumbia.* In addition, the audience was larger and more diverse in terms of age, gender, and educational background. More women attended these concerts, and the age range of the audience varied from infants carried by their single mothers to grandparents spending an afternoon with the entire family. Often, I ran into middle-lower class

men and women, who were attending EPM concerts for the first time because they were curious about the new rhythm everybody was talking about.

Figure 21. Audience in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo. Photograph by author.

The charisma of the EPM artists was evident in their interactions with the public. The audience warmed up every time Azucena Aymara, María de los Ángeles, and Gerardo Morán appeared on the stage. Everybody stood on their seats to dance and sing along with the stars (see Figure 21). Singers asked the happiest groups in the audience to make noise, to raise their hands, or to whistle a tune together with them. Frequently, they asked people to identify who the boss in the house was, or which soccer team they supported. This type of interaction

between the performers and the public was neither characteristic of *música rocolera* festivals, nor of *música nacional* concerts in the late 1990s.

AN ALTERNATIVE MUSIC INDUSTRY

As readers may now realize, the *tecnocumbia* boom did not bring new social actors to the national music scene because both the performers and the listeners were basically the same people who produced and consumed *música chicha* and *música rocolera.* Numerous new ensembles and amateur singers emerged, albeit with little success. Only a few singers, like Gerardo Morán, María de los Ángeles, Azucena Aymara, and Jaime Enrique Aymara, made names for themselves and have been able to stay in the music business for several years.

The *tecnocumbia* boom both created and was influenced by an alternative music industry that helped promote EPM singers at the local, regional, and national levels. EPM concerts were filmed and replayed on VHF television channels in Quito. Eduardo Terán, an entrepreneur who first promoted *música rocolera* on the radio in the 1980s, pioneered the production of this type of TV show. "Ten over Ten" (10/10) was, and still is, the most popular music video show among lower-class Quiteños. The name "Ten over Ten," which points to the highest grade a student can receive in a class, alludes to the presence of ten artists considered the best in their field.

In the late 1980s, this show had a very small audience because it aired in Quito in the late evening hours. In the mid-1990s, Terán organized EPM concerts in *coliseos* and used his television show as a promotional outlet for the events. Terán secured enough performers for the concerts by trading free publicity on his TV show for free performances in the concerts. Both parties benefited in the exchange because the singers were promoted on television while Terán collected video clips for his program. Teran's strategy was indeed a creative way of promoting Ecuadorian music and musicians with minimal economic resources. His profits derived from the entrance fees, generating large sums because of the large audience in attendance. While this exchange worked well for novice singers, renowned artists felt they were exploited because they were not paid for their performances.

Tecnocumbia singers soon developed their own marketing strategies for promoting their music. To get more work at private parties, their main source of income, they distributed posters and folders, which included their pictures and contact information for *"pedidos y contratos"* (requests and contracts). Singers who had released their own CDs gave a few copies to the most enthusiastic audience members at concerts. These strategies, often used to promote music on the margins of the mainstream media, worked to my advantage because I simply

looked for phone numbers in the CD jackets to request interviews with the performers.

The most powerful instrument for the promotion of *tecnocumbia* singers was the television. Whereas in the 1990s there were almost no television shows devoted to any kind of Ecuadorian music, in the 2000s there were numerous shows like *Energía Total* (Total Energy), *Kandela* (Flame), and *Farra Total* (Total Binge). One or two hosts interacted with the audience through telephone calls, in a similar way that radio deejays interact with their audiences. At first, these shows presented video clips produced in an old-fashioned manner, basically placing a static video camera in front of a wall, where the singer stood throughout the length of the song. Later, video clips appeared using as backdrops important monuments and streets of Quito. Singers who had performed in *música rocolera* festivals in New York used images of Manhattan's skyscrapers and the Brooklyn Bridge to show their international profile. These video clips were so popular among the working-class population that pirate vendors began to sell illegal copies in the Centro Histórico. Upper-middle-class people made fun of these home-made videos which lacked technical sophistication.

As the *tecnocumbia* boomed, video production became more versatile. Some video clips presented images of singers and dancers performing in a discotheque or at a club. Others included beautiful landscapes. Musicians and

video producers had a special interest in showing the beauty of Ecuadorian landscapes as a way of reinforcing the idea of "the national" in the songs. Patricio Cóndor pointed out that he was meticulous in choosing landmarks, such as the old streets of the Centro Histórico, to enhance his videos. In other instances, he looked for little-known sites, like a creek or a waterfall in the country. Knowing that Ecuadorian migrants constitute the main viewers of EPM videos, it was important for Terán that the video clips show new Ecuadorian imagery to remind them of their homeland.

In 2004, Patricio Cóndor introduced changes in the production of video clips yet again. Basically, he attempted a dramatization of the song lyrics in the vein of MTV videos. Azucena Aymara and Gerardo Morán embraced this idea immediately, while other singers, like María de los Ángeles, preferred the older and more conservative type of video. In the song/video "Compárame" (Compare Me), Azucena Aymara appears as a commentator on a romantic scene taking place between her boyfriend and another woman. Convinced that she is the woman he needs, Aymara asks her boyfriend to compare her with the other woman. The video is filmed in several places—a restaurant, a living room, and the streets of Quito—following the script narrated in the lyrics. In the video "Palomita," Gerardo Morán drives a motorcycle in the country. He begs his

girlfriend to return to his side and forgive him because he feels lonely, an image that is reinforced by his journey on an isolated road.

Marketing strategies, like posters, CD raffles, video clips, and contact information on CD covers, were rarely implemented to promote *música nacional* in the 1990s, when debates about the standing of the *pasillo* were at a peak. Even today, when *música nacional* concerts are organized for special holidays such as Mother's Day and Valentine's Day, *música nacional* singers are reticent to promote themselves through video clips, not only because of the high costs involved, but also because of an ingrained belief that a true artist is devoted to art for art's sake rather than to economic gain.

MUSIC PIRACY AND THE *TECNOCUMBIA*

Unlike *música nacional* artists, who blame music piracy for the decline of mid-century *música nacional, tecnocumbia* singers confront the problem actively with their own strategies. They compete with pirate vendors by selling their own CDs inexpensively at concerts. They can afford to do so because their production costs are significantly lower than those involved in other types of music recording. First, only one musician is necessary to arrange and record the *pistas.* Second, the actual recording of the voice requires just a few hours of studio time. Cover design expenses are reduced to a minimum because the jacket covers include only a picture and basic information. Because the CDs are made in Peru,

duplication and shipping costs are significantly lower than those made in Colombia or in the United States. While original CDs of *tecnocumbia* sold for seven dollars in music stores of the Centro Histórico, *tecnocumbia* singers sold theirs for only five dollars.

In 2004, the CDs appeared in paperboard jackets instead of jewel boxes, reducing the price to only three dollars. Although still higher than the price of a pirated copy (one dollar), people were willing to buy the original CD because they received a free poster of the artist as bonus. Ecuadorian singers encouraged their fans to support the *artista nacional* by consuming Ecuadorian music instead of other types of music.

Tecnocumbia singers are willing to sell their CDs with minimal profit because the CDs are viewed as promotional tool. They do not consider music piracy a problem because their fans are able to buy their songs for only one dollar. The more people listen to their songs, whether in concerts, streets, or television, the more requests for private shows the singers have. While music piracy works to their advantage; it has greatly affected music producers, who have been unable to recuperate their capital investment.

To maintain their popularity, Azucena Aymara and María de los Ángeles release one CD per year. María de los Ángeles already had ten CDs completed by her late twenties. Azucena Aymara started singing in 1990, and by 2003 had

recorded thirteen CDs. According to María los Ángeles, the secret to her career was to release a CD per year that included a catchy song.

> Every artist has his/her successful moment. They go up into the clouds. The ideal would be to keep oneself always on top. For this reason, we are preparing another CD.[67]

Another strategy has been to release video clips on television, especially while the singer is traveling on a concert tour abroad. Those unable to perform on television have had fewer concert offers and slowly lose visibility. Widinson, for example, was very popular from 2000 to 2003, but his songs were rarely listened to in 2004. Unlike María de los Ángeles, whose video clips were played on television on a daily basis, Widinson did not have his own videos to remind fans of his songs.

THE IMAGE OF *TECNOCUMBIA* SINGERS

To modernize their look, *tecnocumbia* female singers wear tiny and sophisticated outfits such as mini skirts, hot pants, tight blouses, or bras ornamented with sequins and rhinestones. They use high-heeled-over-the-knee leather boots, which make them appear taller. To demonstrate their status as *tecnocumbia* stars, Azucena Aymara and María de los Ángeles enter the stage wearing fashionable ankle-length coats, which they remove in an elegant manner

[67] "Todo artista tiene su momento de auge, suben como la espuma. Lo ideal sería siempre mantenerse arriba. Por eso estamos preparando otro disco."

in front of the audience. Most importantly, they dye their dark hair to blond, thus "whitening," or hiding, their *mestizo* look.

The current image of these singers strongly contrasts with those portrayed in jacket covers of early CDs, which contained recordings of *sanjuanitos* and *albazos.* In her first CD of *huaynos* and *sanjuanitos* (1990), Azucena Aymara appeared in a tight white mini-dress with a plunging neckline and platform shoes. Her black hair is coiffed in a chignon with bangs. Her posture and the window in the background indicate that the picture was probably an amateur snapshot taken at a party, rather than in a photography studio. Azucena's image has changed dramatically over the years. In her 13th volume, she has long blond hair and wears a provocative skirt, slit up the side and showing her entire leg up to the waist. Unlike the first picture, this one is carefully prepared (see Figure 22 and 23). When I asked Azucena why she had dyed her hair, she responded that her fans wanted her to be blond. A few months earlier she had gone back to her dark hair, but received many phone calls from fans telling her that she looked better with blond hair.

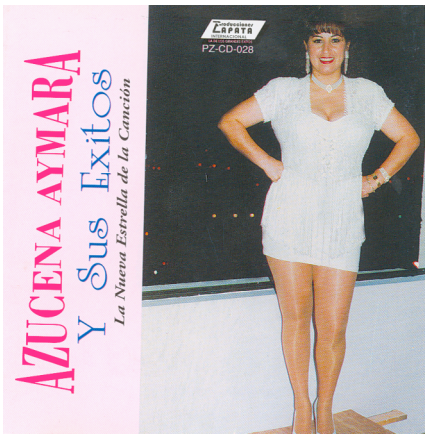


Figure 22. CD PZ-CD-028. Producciones Zapata.

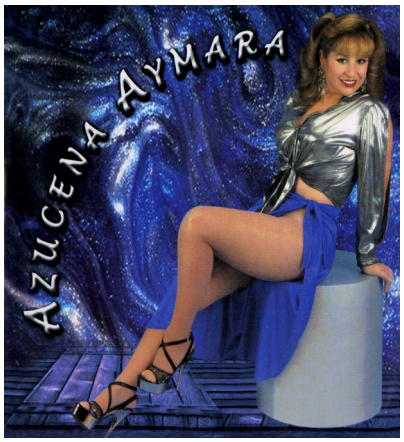


Figure 23. CD Vol. 13.

The image of María de los Ángeles also changed over the years. In one of her first albums, *Del Ecuador para el mundo* (From Ecuador to the World), she appears in her late teens with natural dark hair. On the jacket cover of *Dos locos* (Two Crazy People), an album she and Gerardo Morán recorded together in 2004, she has blond hair and wears a typical *tecnocumbia* outfit. The body posture in both pictures is also quite different, the first demure, the second sensual. Female relatives typically help her with the selection of outfits, which she considers "working clothes" because they are meant to make her performances more attractive and are worn only on stage (see Figure 24, 25, and 26). Guido Narváez, her husband, mentioned that the long boots fit her well because it stylized her figure by making her look taller than she really is and by hiding her thin calves.

Figure 24. CD jacket. (PZ-CD 053).

Figure 25. CD Jacket.

Figure 26. CD jacket. *Dos Locos* (MYG Music).

New female groups emerged with the *tecnocumbia* fever, wearing the same type of outfits and following the blond-hair image established by Azucena Aymara and María de los Ángeles. Unlike these artists, young singers showed

their voluptuous bodies with even more provocative clothing, such as a stage thong. These tiny outfits generated several discourses on the part of detractors, who believed the reasons for the *tecnocumbia's* boom pertained more to the display of the female body than on the singers' musical talent. *Música nacional* singers, who took pride in having made an artistic name with their voices, discipline, and hard work, were the most forceful critics. They condemned the lack of professionalism of these amateur groups.

Despite the critics, many interviewees at EPM concerts considered the *tecnocumbia* outfits and dances to be merely part of the stage performance. Others suggested that it was the singers' (Azucena Aymara and María de los Ángeles) capacity to sing with sentiment, rather than their sexy image, that attracted them most. Overall, EPM fans had different perceptions of female singers, which did not necessarily coincide with those of detractors.

DANCING TO THE *TECNOCUMBIA*

Most renowned Latin American national musics are dance music. Some are internationally known like the *samba, tango, cumbia,* and *merengue.* Others, like the Peruvian *marinera* and the Chilean *cueca,* are known only within the national territory. *Música nacional,* however, is not often danced to in today's social venues or dance schools. In other countries, government and cultural institutions play an important role in perpetuating the practice of national dances

by teaching them in schools and recreational centers, or by organizing carnivals, festivals, or dance contests. Being the most representative Argentine dance, the *tango* is performed in tourist places and taught in private and public dance schools. In conservatories, music students are required to take *tango* classes as part of their curricular program.[68] During my short stay in Lima, I found flyers promoting *marinera* dance classes in recreational centers. I also observed people dancing it at social clubs, inspiring the admiration of the public.

Pride for national dances, however, is not a characteristic feature for Ecuadorian people. It is usually professional dancers, like the Ballet Jachigua and the Ballet of the Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, who perform them as part of stage presentations. Sporadically, elementary and junior high school students dance to some national dances in civic parades; however, ordinary people, especially the younger generations, do not know how to dance them.

The *tecnocumbia* boom fulfilled the youth's desire for a modern dance expression associated with Ecuadorian music. Following the Peruvian model, *tecnocumbia* singers in Ecuador have incorporated dance choreographies with energetic and elaborate movements into their performances. I often encountered young men in their early twenties coming to the concerts to watch the dance steps. In one occasion, a man jumped to the stage and, positioning himself beside the

[68] An Ecuadorian student who studies classical guitar in Buenos Aires stated that he had to enroll in a *tango* class to fulfill mandatory course requirements.

dancers, clumsily followed the dance steps. Many times I found myself hypnotized by the dance movements, paying especial attention to the choreography. Overall, the shows offered sonic and visual entertainment in which the singers and the dancers were the main protagonists (see Figure 27).

Figure 27. María de los Ángeles with her dance group. Photograph by the author.

While people in the amphitheater danced on the steps with limited space to move around, people sitting close to the stage danced with their partners in the open areas located to the sides of the rows. The *coliseo* became a huge dance floor connecting people in their desires to spend a happy time and forget momentarily of their problems.

CONCLUSION

The *tecnocumbia* became the expression that best reflects the Ecuadorian experience of international migration. Song lyrics dealing with long-distance relationships, breakups, and family separation resonated in the lyrical content of *música nacional* and *música rocolera,* thus giving continuity to the aesthetics of "suffering" that characterize Ecuadorian popular music.

Unlike Peru, the modern sound of the *tecnocumbia* was never appealing to upper-middle class Ecuadorians, who always identified themselves with *música nacional* and other types of international popular music. They have associated the *tecnocumbia* with drunkenness, quarrels, and lower-class bars. It was identified with *música chicha* and *música rocolera* because all these musics used the same production, marketing, and dissemination networks. In addition, composers and performers associated with *música rocolera* and *música chicha* were also the composers and arrangers of *tecnocumbias.*

Lower-class entrepreneurs created alternative media to promote EPM and attract people to the massive concerts they organized. Ecuadorian singers released their own record productions without the interference from the national record industry, which had largely disappeared as a result of music piracy. The agency of both singers and entrepreneurs was crucial for the dissemination of the *tecnocumbia* at all levels. Lower-class Ecuadorians supported concert events through their attendance and by purchasing CDs. The remittances they received

provided them with the economic means to engage in such activities. Most importantly, Ecuadorian migrants in their host countries gave a significant impulse to EPM development with their demand for Ecuadorian music (See Chapter 7). As a result, Ecuadorian singers have traveled and disseminated EPM in the Ecuadorian colonies they established in host countries.

Interestingly, while the mainstream media was drawing attention to the *tecnocumbia* boom in 2003, *tecnocumbia* singers were looking for new music because the *tecnocumbia* repertoire was losing popularity among their fans. In this period, new female groups emerged in the *Costa* and *Sierra,* releasing *tecnocumbia* versions of traditional *pasillos* such as "El aguacate," and other types of international music. It is hard to tell whether the *tecnocumbia* continues to attract massive audiences in Ecuador. Many changes have occurred in Ecuador since I left the field in 2004, and as this study shows, social changes are often manifested in musical practices.

The "lack-of-originality" and "lack-of-professionalism" discourses became mechanisms of alterity construction on the basis that people who lack creativity and artistic quality are not professionals. As seen in this chapter, Ecuadorian singers and their fans do make aesthetic choices and perceive the *tecnocumbia* as Ecuadorian despite its Peruvian origin.

CHAPTER 7

THE "INTERNATIONALIZATION" OF ECUADORIAN POPULAR MUSIC

Almost every Ecuadorian has a close relative, friend, or acquaintance living abroad, as I confirmed in myriad conversations with taxi drivers, street vendors, domestic servants, teachers, musicians, acquaintances, and people in better-off positions. When I started my research in 2001, all international airlines with connections to Europe were flying with full airplanes to Madrid, Rome, and Amsterdam. Men and women from all walks of life were leaving the country, including rural peasants who had never left their hometown as well as urban middle-class people who had never traveled overseas. Not only the poor emigrated in search of better opportunities, but also upper-middle-class Ecuadorians with higher education whose economic position was severely affected by the economic crisis of the late 1990s. Some travelers were initiating the migratory process; others were reuniting with their spouses and relatives who have left before.

The severity of the crisis, reflected in Ecuador's loss of its national currency, reached its peak with the collapse of the national bank system and

President Jamil Mahuad's decision to dollarize the economy on January 2000. Ecuadorians not only lost their national currency, but also the real value of their savings and incomes in the conversion to dollar. The *sucre* devalued 66% and there was a 60% rate of inflation (Jokisch 2002). Many businesses went into bankruptcy, and the unemployment rate increased to 15% nationwide (Jokisch 2002). As a result, many Ecuadorians were unable to buy basic products like food and medicine, or pay their house loans and rents. This situation increased the levels of delinquency, burglary, and violence, making people feel unsafe even in their own houses. The government's neglect toward basic social demands for health, education, and social security aggravated the crisis, resulting in multiple riots organized by teachers, doctors, and *jubilados* (retired people) who had not received their paychecks for several months. The Ecuadorian population responded to the economic crisis with unprecedented legal and illegal migration. Some people left for the United States, Spain, Italy, and other European countries; others emigrated to Canada, Venezuela, Chile, Argentine, and Australia.

The international migration had a great impact on the production, dissemination, and consumption of Ecuadorian popular music (EPM). This was reflected in the growing demand for records of all types of Ecuadorian music, both in Ecuador and abroad. EPM promoters and singers considered this boom as the "internationalization" of Ecuadorian music; however, intellectuals and upper-

middle-class Ecuadorians viewed this trend merely as a "translocation" of audiences and musicians to new contexts because only Ecuadorian migrants[69] listen and dance to Ecuadorian music abroad. Upper-middle-class Ecuadorians have regretted that Ecuadorian music is little known internationally and that Ecuadorians lack a "true" national identity, in the sense of having a clearly identifiable cultural expression such as a popular music, cuisine, or drink, in the international arena as they think other Latin American countries do.

This chapter analyzes public discourses around the internationalization of Ecuadorian music. The first section provides an overview of two major waves of international migration in the 1970s and late 1990s, which gave rise to the emergence of *música rocolera*, *música chicha* and the *tecnocumbia* boom. The second section analyzes upper-middle-class discourses referencing a supposed lack of national identity and the existence of an inferiority complex among Ecuadorians. I argue that these discourses reveal ethnic and class differences reflecting the absence of a "national consciousness" able to integrate the pluriethnic and multicultural Ecuadorian population in the national imaginary of the upper-middle classes. Finally, I focus on everyday cultural practices of lower-class Ecuadorians, which "materialize" and "remind" the nation both within and outside Ecuador. From a standpoint that examines "nationalism from below"

[69] Although Ecuadorian citizens of all social classes have emigrated in the late 1990s, I use the term "Ecuadorian migrants" to refer to lower-class Ecuadorians who work in the construction, health-care, and service sector.

(Mallon 1995: 5), I regard the ubiquity of Ecuadorian popular music at the turn of the twenty-first century as an alternative, bottom-up expression of nationhood, which gives visibility to social actors that have been historically neglected in the elites' imaginary of the nation.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN ECUADOR

While rural-to-urban migration has been a common phenomenon in Ecuador throughout the twentieth century, international migration was rare before the 1970s (Jokisch 2001). The international migration of the 1970s originated in the southern highland provinces of Cañar and Azuay, and was triggered by the decline of the Panama hat business, the main economic activity of the region (Kyle 2000). It characterized by the exodus of a predominantly male rural population to the United States (New York and Chicago), who worked in the construction and food service industry. Many migrants established their permanent residence in the United States, even though migration was initially conceived as a means to secure a living in Ecuador (Goycoechea 2001, cited in Gratton 2005).

By contrast, the international migration of the late 1990s had national overtones, with both men and women of different ethnicities, social classes, and educational backgrounds, looking for better opportunities abroad. It characterized by the exodus of a predominantly female, urban, and educated population, who

worked in domestic service, including child and elder care (Jokisch and Pribilsk 2002). This international migration expanded Ecuadorians' imaginary of the nation beyond the national borders. The National Migration Office reports reflect its magnitude. In only three years, from 1999 to 2001, the Ecuadorian emigration exceeded one million people, approximately 10% of the country's population (Fundación Peralta 2004: 136). Ecuadorians are currently the largest foreign community in Spain, followed by Marruecos, Colombia, and Rumania. In the United States, Ecuadorians are the eighth largest Hispanic/Latino group and the second largest South American nationality after Colombia (Jokish 2001: 60).

According to Jokisch (2002), Ecuador has become a country that "exports people and imports capital (remittances)." Remittances that Ecuadorian migrants[70] send to their families constitute Ecuador's second major source of income to the Gross National Product, exceeded only by petroleum exports. Remittances sustain not only Ecuadorian mmigrants' families, but also the country's dollarized economy. With the increasing flow of money and people, a migration industry has emerged providing travel services as well as money transfer, legal advice, and long-distance communication. Cyber cafes and *locutorios* (long-distance telephone cabins) have mushroomed in Ecuador and Spain, connecting Ecuadorian migrants with their relatives at home through long-distance calls and

[70] "Ecuadorian migrants" is the term used in Ecuador to refer to people who leave the country.

e-mail service. *Coyoteros* and *chulqueros* offering illegal immigration to the United States also multiplied.

Though poverty and unemployment were the primary reasons for the Ecuadorian exodus in the late 1990s, migration scholars have defined other factors playing a more significant role in the decision to migrate. Sassen, for example, asserts that poverty triggers migration only under certain given conditions since many countries with high rates of poverty and unemployment do not have a significant history of migration. For her, migration is determined by economic and political dynamics such as the effects of globalization, forms of capitalism, migration networks, and the effective demand for low-salary workers in the host society" (Sassen 2004: 63-4). In Ecuador's case, the choice to immigrate to Spain was conditioned by the Spanish government's demand for temporal agricultural workers. Economic factors and immigration laws also determined Ecuadorians' choice of Spain as a host country. Until August 2003, it was relatively easy to immigrate to Spain because Ecuadorians had no visa requirements. The cost of airplane tickets and the "bolsa" of $2,000, the amount of money shown at the immigration port, were also affordable. The "bolsa" was usually sent back to Ecuador so that another family member could use it. Overall, immigration to Spain was less complex and significantly lower in cost than immigration to the United States.

Goycoechea and Ramírez (2002) argue that social and cultural factors such as the "social imaginaries" constructed around the migration experience, as well as family strategies and articulation of social networks among migrants, have a strong influence on people's decision to migrate. According to these scholars, the social imaginaries about the migrants' lives in the host countries are usually associated with ideas of success and progress that non-migrants want for themselves. Having social networks in the host country is extremely important to succeed in finding a job and a place to stay during the first months. Migration is viewed as a family strategy and a family investment, rather than an individual decision. Who migrates first, whether the man or the woman, is a decision defined by power relations within the household as well as on the job market in the host society (Herrera 2005: 91). The demand for in-house domestic service in Europe attracts middle- and lower-class women because of the salaries (US$400 to $600, plus free room and board), which are three to five times the salary of a maid or a public school teacher in Ecuador. Other factors, such as domestic violence and travel excitement, induce people to migrate as well.

From a different perspective, Emily Walmsley explains the massive exodus in terms of a "migratory syndrome," which affects the values, attitudes, and aspirations of people who have not migrated. It creates a false impression of having a "relative social deprivation" because they are unable to reproduce the

type of lifestyle that migrants' families have (Walmsley 2001: 156). The latter, for example, are able to buy clothes, pay private schools, or go to concerts and discotheques, which the former cannot afford.

Upper-middle and lower-class Ecuadorians migrated to the host countries not only with hopes for a better future, but also with their music. They requested their families in Ecuador to send CDs of Ecuadorian national music, which, according to the individual's ethnic and social background, could mean *música nacional*, *música chicha*, *música rocolera*, or *tecnocumbia*. With the growing demand for Ecuadorian music, music entrepreneurs began organizing concert tours to the United States and Europe with renowned Ecuadorian singers, who regard themselves as international artists.

THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ECUADORIAN MUSIC

As mentioned in the introduction, most upper-middle-class Ecuadorians believe that the country lacks international presence with its music. Unlike other Latin American musics such as *tango*, *samba*, *cumbia, salsa*, and *merengue*, Ecuadorian music has not gained audiences abroad. During the course of my research, several upper-middle class informants expressed dismay that there was no genre or Ecuadorian singer of international prestige. In the mid 1990s the president of the Society of Ecuadorian Authors and Composers (SAYCE) was

looking for a "Luis Miguel" who put the *pasillo* on the international musical arena as the famous Mexican singer did with the *bolero*.[7172]

The *pasillo* "Sombras" (Shadows) by Carlos Brito (1891-1943) is frequently cited in *música nacional* anthologies as the Ecuadorian song best known internationally. The song was composed when Brito, a highland popular composer who worked in variety shows, took a selection of poems written by Mexican Rosario Sansores and set them to music on the occasion of his mother's death. The song became such a hit that the Ecuadorian government declared Sansores "the prediclect daughter of Ecuador" and "the most romantic woman of the twentieth century" (Carrión 2002: 92). In 1967, she received the "Poetic Lyre," a literary award that the Ecuadorian government bestows on its best poets.

Oswaldo Carrión, the compiler of the anthology "Lo mejor del siglo XX" (The Best of the Twentieth Century), affirms that this *pasillo* "is possibly the most beautiful song in Latin America" (Carrión 2002: 92). In the poll he conducted to find the one hundred most popular songs in the *música nacional* anthology, "Sombras" ranked in the first position. He supports his ranking by drawing attention to the fact that more than one hundred versions have been recorded by famous international artists such as Olga Guillot, Julio Iglesias, Raphael, Alberto Cortez, and José Feliciano. The frequent quote of international artists performing

[71] *El Comercio*. Nov. 21, 1993.

this song in foreign venues reveals an intense desire of upper-middle-class Ecuadorians for international recognition of their music.

Many Ecuadorians believe that the *pasillo* is known only in Ecuador and that it is in danger of disappearance. My analysis, however, reveals three periods of international diffusion. The first coincides with recordings of Ecuadorian music by Columbia and Victor Records in the early 1910s. Foreign bands and *bel canto* singers recorded numerous *pasillos* in recording studios located in Spain, Germany and the United States. The second period is related to what most Ecuadorians remember as a "musical feat," when the Dúo Ecuador traveled to New York in 1930 to "conquer the world" with their songs. The third period is linked to the rise of the Ecuadorian national music industry and the international concert tours of Julio Jaramillo and the Trío Los Brillantes in the 1960s.

Several factors explain the persisting perception by upper-middle class Ecuadorians that Ecuadorian music lacks international presence. First, the *pasillo* underwent stylistic changes in the 1970s and gradually came to be perceived as *música rocolera*, whose association with drunkenness creates a questionable and undesirable image for a national identity. Second, the *pasillo* lost the support of the younger generations of the upper-middle classes, who diversified their musical preferences into various kinds of international music of the 1960s and 1970s. Finally, none of the *música nacional* genres represented a sense of

modernity, or sophisticated dance music, as *cumbia*, *salsa* and disco music did. The *pasillo* ceased to be danced to in the mid-twentieth century, and other *música nacional* genres such as the *sanjuanito* and the *albazo* are seen as outdated folk dances.

According to social psychologist Martha Traverso, the view that links national identity with "international presence" conceives the first as the "export image," reflecting what Ecuadorians pretend be for the "Other" rather than what they believe themselves to be (Traverso 1998: 192). This view is reinforced by other pervasive discourses frequently heard in conversations of upper-middle and middle class Ecuadorians about the national identity. Their comments often revolve around Ecuadorians not having a musical identity as Brazilians and Colombians do with the *samba* and the *cumbia* respectively, or Ecuador not having a drink that identifies it internationally as Brazil and Cuba do with the *caipirinha* and the *mojito* (Donoso 2000: 138). It is worth noting that two typical drinks widely consumed by the indigenous people and urban poor in traditional *fiestas*– *chicha* (fermented corn beer) and *canelazo* (sweetened cinnamon water boiled with *aguardiente* or rum)– are not taken into consideration because of their ethnic and lower-class origins.

In a similar way, Ecuadorian writer Agustín Cueva notes that: "Latin American popular music has been successful in the entire world. Ecuadorian

music, however, is the exception" (cit. in Donoso 2000: 56). Similarly, Miguel Donoso Pareja, a well-known writer from the coast, argues that Ecuador is "a country without a musical genre that identifies and integrates its people, a country that has not developed a popular music." He asserts, "there is no Ecuadorian dance music, except indigenous music, which is 'kicked' (*se patalea*) monotonously by the lower-middle classes in the highland region" (Donoso 2000: 55). Furthermore, he asserts that Ecuadorian music is not music for entertainment, but for weeping and getting drunk. It seems to Donoso Pareja that "the only musical identification Ecuadorians have is the suffering, lamentations, weeping, drunkenness and the heartbreak of unrequited or impossible love affairs. In short, [it demonstrates] a negative, self-commiserating, and castrating identity" (Donoso 2000: 56). Many upper-middle class Ecuadorians I interviewed at random in Quito and Guayaquil formulated similar value judgments, albeit in a subtler manner.

Expanding his argument to the domain of *comidas típicas* (typical dishes), Donoso Pareja provides examples that show the weak culinary presence of Ecuadorians in the world. He asserts that in Quito it is possible to eat Venezuelan *arepas*, Mexican *tacos*, Argentine *parrilladas*, Chilean *empanadas*, and Cuban sandwiches. However, Ecuadorian "typical dishes," such as *muchines* (kind of elongated *arepa* made of yucca and stuffed with cheese) and *bolones de verde*

(round made of plantain mixed with cheese or roasted pork fat), are unknown even in the border cities of neighboring countries, such as Ipiales (Colombia) and Huaquillas (Peru). To complete the panorama of "Ecuador's absence in the world," Donoso argues that even the famous hand-woven straw hats from Ecuador are internationally known as "Panama hats," a name that hides their Ecuadorian origin (Donoso 2000: 137-8). [73]

In New York, I met Ecuadorians immigrants who engaged in similar discourses. A middle-class woman who immigrated the United States in the 1970s argued that Ecuadorians lacked a national identity because they did not have a virgin of national veneration as the Virgen of Guadalupe in Mexico. Her comment pointed the fact that in Ecuador each region or village worships its own virgin. For example, the Virgen del Quinche (Virgin of Quinche) is venerated in Quito, while the Virgen del Cisne (Swan's Virgin) is adored in Loja, and the Virgen del Consuelo (Consolation's Virgin) is acclaimed in Guayaquil. The Virgen de las Nubes (Virgin of the Clouds), worshiped in the provinces of Azuay and Azogues, is considered the Virgin of the *Ecuatorianos ausentes* (Absent Ecuadorians, i.e. Ecuadorian migrants).

Expanding her viewpoint, this woman was disappointed that Ecuador does not have a typical Christmas dinner like Americans do on Thanksgiving Day.

[73] The Panama hats were originally weaved in Montecristi, a small town in the province of Manabí. In Ecuador, they are known as "sombreros de Montecristi" (Montecristi hats).

Having lived in New York for more than three decades, this woman had forgotten that there are typical dishes and drinks prepared everywhere in Ecuador during religious holidays, such as the *colada morada* (purple oat drink) for *Día de los Difuntos* (Day of the Deceased People) on November 2, *pan de pascua* (sweet bread) for Christmas, and the *fanesca* (codfish soup with numerous grains) for Holy Week. She also disregards the fact that economic conditions in Ecuador are very different from those in the United States and that each family has the Christmas dinner it can afford. Indeed, many families living at extreme poverty levels are happy if they are able to bring any food at all to their tables on Christmas day, or any other day of the year.

For upper-middle-class Ecuadorians, the search for "international presence" is a search for international recognition as a means to validate, from the outside, a sense of national identity. As Donoso Pareja argues, "to be in the world means to have an identity, and from this identity, to transcend, that is, to expand, to be meaningful, to be unique first, and then to be recognized as an equal…." (2000: 159). However, this "international presence" is only recognized when cultural expressions are "cleaned-up," modernized, and turned into "acceptable" national symbols, which is not the case of *música chicha*, nor for the *chicha* and *canelazo* drinks mentioned above. The elite notion of national identity focuses

more on how Ecuadorians view themselves through the eyes of the "Other," rather than in their own terms.

INFERIORITY-COMPLEX DISCOURSE

Pointing to Herzfeld's notion of "cultural intimacy" as a unifying element that links populations to the nation-states, Turino argues that "pride and shame are two sides of the same national sentiment coin. Both indicate a strong identification with the State and the intimacy of belonging" (Turino 2003: 174). Most upper-middle class Ecuadorians seem to be connected to the nation by a "shameful identity" (*identidad vergonzosa*), which makes them underestimate their popular cultural expressions. Shame manifests itself in complaints about Ecuador's negative image in the international news, such as the abuses of presidents ousted in the last decade, especially Abdalá Bucaram, or the sensationalist news of an Ecuadorian woman, Lorena Bobbitt, who cut off her husband's penis in an act of temporary insanity produced by a long-term abusive relationship.[74]

In Ecuador, one can frequently hear discourses in the media about Ecuadorians' "inferiority complex" and "low self-esteem," which make them place higher value on foreign cultural expression and products than on their own. This perception can be observed in the declaration that Jefferson Pérez gave to the

[74] Lorena Bobbitt. Year….

press when he won the Olympic medal: "I had to overcome our [the nation's] inferiority complex in order to win the race."[75] It is also observed in the positive turn of the phrase "Sí se puede" (Yes, we can do it), which became the national *motto* during Ecuador's national soccer team's participation in the 2002 World Cup.[76] The slogan also inspired Ecuadorian people to believe that it is possible to succeed in any field with discipline and organized teamwork, as the national soccer team did.

Several marketing campaigns, with slogans such as "Elige siempre lo nuestro" (Always choose our products) and "Dile sí al producto nacional" (Say "yes" to national products), were conceived in the early 2000s with the aim of encouraging consumption of Ecuadorian goods and changing people's attitude toward them. Both campaigns advocated the consumption of such products, not only as a sales strategy but also as a way to generate employment, stimulate the economy, and reduce the escalating rates of international migration (Ortiz 2003: 38). These marketing strategies also played on a perceived sense of inferiority, putting a positive spin on this reference point for mutual recognition among Ecuadorians.

[75] *El Comercio*, n/a.
[76] "*Sí se puede*" is an expression often utilized in other Latin American countries with similar connotations to those given in Ecuador. This expression, however, became an inspirational *motto* moving Ecuadorians to do things in a different manner to get the results expected.

Where does Ecuadorians' negative view of themselves come from? To answer this question, I examine Ecuador's ethnic history and sociologist Espinosa's particular view of *mestizaje*, which differs from those of "racial mixture" and "cultural syncretism" in the social sciences. He suggests that *mestizos* who recognize themselves as such are "Indians" with a stronger level of Hispanization than self-identified "Indians" (Espinosa 2000: 27). In other words, *mestizos* are simply "ex-Indians" who have undergone a special process of acculturation to hide an indigenous "cultural conscience" (idem). For Espinosa, *mestizos* have not lost their indigenous cultural orientation—including language, traditions, and beliefs—because it is a process of accommodation, rather than acculturation.

This "strategic acculturation," takes place in everyday life because "Indianness" is associated with images of laziness and submissiveness, which were constructed by the dominant classes during the colonial period (Silva 2004, Pachano 2003, Traverso 1998). From this perspective, "Indianness" is repudiated, whereas "mestizo-ness" is held up as the nation's ideal. As a result, *mestizos* constantly experience a double consciousness. While in their public life they put on social masks to hide their "Indianness," in the private sphere they express freely their "innate cultural conscience." This life of simulacra produces in Ecuadorian *mestizos* a negative view of themselves and a constant denial of their

cultural selves ((Espinosa 2000: 16-18).). This double consciousness becomes a significant problem in a country whose population, according to the 2001 census, is made up of 77.42% self-identified *mestizos*.[77]

From a social and psychological perspective, anthropologist José Almeida argues that "if we give too much attention to the economic development (and standards of living) in Europe and the United States as an identity reference (and a model to follow), it is unavoidable that the comparison will generate a deflated sense of confidence and an extreme feeling of inferiority among Latin Americans" (*my translation*) (Almeida 2003: 84). Since social conditions in developing and developed countries are different, a lack of self-esteem increases for people in the former when they try to emulate the standards of living of the latter.

The search for Ecuadorian national identity within an ideology invoking cultural homogenization, places emphasis on concepts of origin, tradition, and international recognition, rather than on lived experiences. This section has explored public discourses of upper-middle-class Ecuadorians about a supposed lack of national identity. The next section examines the articulation of "Ecuadorianness" by lower-class Ecuadorians, based on experiences and activities that "materialize**"** and "remind" the nation in everyday life.

[77] Fundación Peralta 2004. In previous years, official statistics reported 40% of Indigenous people, 40% of mestizos, 15% of Hispanics, and 5% of Afro-Ecuadorian population.

THE TRANSLOCATION OF EPM

Rather than "internationalization," the term "translocation" better explains the change of locality of Ecuadorian musical practices. The translocation of EPM, however, does not simply imply a change of geographical location, even if the audience, the singers, and the song repertoire remains the same. Processes of mediation, transformation, and dislocation generate new meanings, images, and perceptions of the nation. For example, many lower-class Ecuadorian migrants in Madrid regard *música chicha* and *música rocolera* as emblems of Ecuadorian national identity because of its ubiquity and popularity among co-nationals. Furthermore, upper-middle-class Ecuadorians who criticize and stigmatize these styles of music are absent, or less numerous, and cannot impose their musical aesthetics in Spain.

In my view, *música rocolera* and *música chicha* have become expressions of popular nationalism because they have shaped a collective way of imagining and feeling the nation from the lower classes' perspective. Pallares rightly points out in her study of Ecuadorians in Chicago, "immigrant forms of popular nationalism can be quite inventive… In many instances, they may actively question dominant forms of representation or create new ones" (Pallares 2005: 349-50). This is particularly true for young Ecuadorian migrants who are not familiar with the sounds and elite images of the traditional *pasillo* from the 1930s-

1950s and perceive *música chicha* and *música rocolera* as national music expressions.

The dislocation and transformation of musical practices are observed in the logistics of performance contexts. As seen in Chapter 6, massive EPM concerts in Quito take place in large *coliseos* and bull fighting squares. They start in the early afternoon of a weekend day, and continue for six to eight hours long. These concerts combine dance music (*música chicha* and *tecnocumbia*) and sentimental music (*música rocolera* and *música del recuerdo*) to fulfill the demands of a heterogeneous public. Considered old-fashioned, the repertoire of traditional *pasillos* is rarely performed in these occasions.

A striking characteristic of these events is the configuration of the audience, which creates a social atmosphere reminiscent of the nation as a metaphor. It includes people from different ethnic, educational, generational, and occupational backgrounds. Entire families formed by middle-aged adults with their children, parents, siblings, and cousins attend these concerts. Teenagers get together with classmates and neighborhood friends to share leisure time. Many times I encountered single mothers embracing their infants, or fathers accompanied by their children. Their partners and spouses had left for Spain and EPM concerts provided affordable recreation for coping with sadness and loneliness.

The audience actively engaged in the concert by singing, dancing, or reacting to a good or bad performance. People's dancing habits were shaped by the performance contexts. Since these events were held in *coliseos*, people danced by themselves on the steps, alone, or with the people standing alongside them. They ate local snacks such as *tostado con chochos* (roasted corn with a type of lupin bean) and thin-sliced fried potatoes. The consumption of Trópico typified these events. Although alcohol consumption was forbidden, vendors always found ways to sell it without penalization. They hided the small bottles in the jackets' pockets, or sold the transparent liquid in plastic bags, which people then poured in a soda bottle. The collective social behavior, the music, the drinks, and the food materialized a particular way of "feeling the nation" in this social context.

Conversely, I attended EPM concerts in Madrid and New York, which took place in bars and discotheques, and included the performance of only one or two Ecuadorian singers due to the high cost of transportation and lodging. Their performances were usually scheduled a couple of hours after midnight when the place had filled with dancers. The colors of the Ecuadorian flag (yellow, blue, and red) placed at the entrance of the discotheques temporarily marked these spaces as a "piece of Ecuador." The family environment characteristic of EPM concerts in Quito was absent, however, due to time constraints, the cost of the tickets, and regulations forbidding the entrance of minors.

In Madrid, I attended a couple of EPM concerts. One of them was a middle-class discotheque located in a central vein of Madrid, close to the metro station Nuevos Ministerios. Although the venue had a capacity for approximately four hundred people, the place was packed because the organizers had oversold entrance tickets. Most people were Ecuadorians because the singers of the night show were Sharon, a young and sensual *tecnocumbia* singer from Guayaquil, and Tormenta, a famous Argentine singer popular in the early 1970s. The public, whose age range varied from the early 20s to the late 40s, was impressed with their performances and joined them in singing. I was surprised to see young people singing Tormenta's songs because her music was popular three decades earlier and no longer appeared in the mainstream media. Tormenta, like many singers from the 1960s and 1970s, had young followers who knew their songs well.

A few days later, I attended another EPM concert in a small discotheque near the metro station Plaza España. This venue was not as sophisticated as the discotheque at Nuevos Ministerios. It had a capacity of approximately a hundred. The cost of the entrance ticket–eight euros–was relatively inexpensive in comparison to that of twenty euros at Nuevos Ministerios. In the latter, the public consisted of middle-class people who danced to *cumbias*, *baladas rítmicas*, and *pop music*. By contrast, the small discotheque attracted lower-class youth in their

early twenties who danced to *tecnocumbias* popular in Ecuador. Their social status was reflected not only in their dressing, but also in their preference for t*ecnocumbia*, which indicated their recent immigration to Spain.

Many Ecuadorian singers were in concert tours in Madrid in May 2003 on the occasion of Mother's Day. Flyers announcing performances of Widinson, Jaime Enrique Aymara, María de los Ángeles, Claudio Vallejo, and Ana Lucía Proaño were posted in *locutorio*s and discotheques, generating great expectation among their fans. These singers promoted themselves as *artistas nacionales* who brought Ecuadorian music to alleviate their compatriots' nostalgia. They reproduced in Spain the typical atmosphere of EPM concerts in Quito by asking questions such as: Where are the *chupadores* (drinkers)? Where are the *bulliciosos* (noisy people)? Who is the boss in the household? Or where are the *hinchas* (fans) of the national soccer team? The latter question often raised heated reactions among the public, especially when the singers requested people to identify their soccer team affiliation. Regional differences were often expressed in the recognition or rejection of a soccer team from the *Costa* or the *Sierra*. For example, fans of the Liga Deportiva de Quito would jeer the fans of Barcelona, a soccer team from Guayaquil, and vice versa. These differences were immediately "forgotten" when the singer asked again for the fans of the national soccer team,

asserting that it was the duty of every Ecuadorian citizen to support the national team because it represented Ecuador abroad.

In Quito, Ecuadorian singers commented on how Ecuadorian migrants cried when they listened to Ecuadorian music, and how hard it was for them to live away from the family. In Spain, the singers portrayed themselves as messengers bringing news and greetings from the homeland. The translocation of EPM generated new meanings and new images of the nation for both Ecuadorians in Spain and staying at home. EPM was not just a working-class music but the music representing and reminding them of the homeland.

ECUADORIANS IN MADRID AND NEW YORK

In order to (re)create a sense of community abroad, lower-class Ecuadorian migrants gather every Saturday and Sunday in public parks such as El Retiro and Casa de Campo in Madrid, and Flushing Park in Queens, New York. In these places, they interact with other co-nationals for mutual support, or to share experiences and exchange information regarding job opportunities and legalization of residence status. Like the discotheques, these parks temporarily become Ecuadorian spaces marked by recreational activities, musical sounds, and culinary tastes and smells reminiscent of the homeland. Ecuadorians played *Ecua-volley* and *Ecua-fútbol*, typical leisure activities practiced in Quito during the weekends. The prefix "Ecua" simply underscores the fact that it is Ecuadorian

people who play these games, rather than any special way of playing volley or soccer. Some people gathered to sing *pasillos* to a guitar accompaniment; young people listened to *tecnocumbias* and *música chicha* from portable CD players they bring to the park. Although Ecuadorian migrant associations organize sports events in different parks throughout Madrid, the social gathering described above did not seem to be coordinated by any particular organization.

Overall, the Ecuadorian environment in these parks replicated the ones found, for example, in Parque El Ejido in Quito, where lower-class Ecuadorians frequently gather to play volleyball or watch street actors entertaining the public. In El Ejido, informal vendors and young artists sell their handcrafts, paintings, and hand-made jewelry in small booths or on the sidewalks. Indigenous women walk around the park with their baskets selling *tostados con chochos*. By reproducing similar recreational activities in Madrid, Ecuadorian migrants are able to recreate and imagine the national space much as the national community in Ecuador does.

Flavors and smells are powerful reminders of the nation. Typical Ecuadorian food, such as *fritada* (deep fried pork with hominey), *papas con cuero* (potatoes with pork rinds), *hornados* (roasted pork), and grilled *cuys* (guinea pigs) bring memories of Ecuador's cuisine. Ecuadorian migrants buy Ecuadorian-brand products, such as "Galletas Amor" (waffle cookies) and "Cola Tropical" (a pink-

colored soda), at expensive prices they are willing to pay to "taste" the homeland flavor. A family-sized bottle of Cola Tropical, for example, cost six euros (seven dollars), the price of a complete lunch meal in an Ecuadorian restaurant in Madrid.

Most people came to the park simply to talk to each other. They usually stood around a big bottle of beer and drank from a plastic glass that was passed around in the same way as people in EPM concerts in Quito did. Since Spanish laws prohibit the sale of beer in the parks, vendors found creative ways to sell it, just as vendors in the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo did. They placed beer bottles in a cooler and hid it in the interior of a baby carriage. The vendors pretended to be caring parents walking their babies around the park.

Ecuadorian migrants have earned a reputation of being responsible and disciplined workers in Spain; however, they are also viewed as messy people because they leave trash in the parks. As a result, the municipal authorities prohibited their recreational activities in El Retiro. Ecuadorian migrants moved to Casa de Campo, a suburban park located on the outskirts of Madrid. Although there were dumpsters located in strategic points, at the end of the day the park was filled with empty bottles and plastic glasses thrown all over the place. Trying to avoid problems with the municipality, and anticipating a new ordinance that would forbid their gatherings in Casa de Campo, as has happened before in El

Retiro, food vendors collected money among themselves and paid someone to clean the area at the end of the day. This measure reduced the amount of trash, though it did not solve the problem entirely.

The first image I saw at Casa de Campo was lots of small groups of people standing close to an improvised "food court." Food entrepreneurs had arrived early in the morning to find a strategic place to assemble a dining area with portable tables and chairs they brought in a van. They cooked favorite typical dishes on portable stoves situated right beside the dining area. Other food sellers provided light meals and snacks such as pieces of fried ripe plantain with cheese, or green mango slices with salt.

In a corner of the park, a group of migrants were offering haircuts for only five euros, an amount significantly lower than that paid in a regular salon. The basic tools required for this job were a pair of scissors, a comb, a spray bottle with water, a towel, and a portable stool. Each time the police appeared in the park to check the working permits, the hair stylists ran away with their tools to avoid penalization for disobeying the park rules. In another area, there were people singing *pasillos* and *sanjuanitos*. I joined some of these groups and asked people about their migration experiences and their reasons for leaving Ecuador. Some people were better off in Spain and had successful stories to recount. They had found a job immediately after their arrival and had legalized their residency

within a couple of years. Many were able to bring their spouses and children and lived a normal family life. These people felt they had a better standard of living and could save money to eventually buy a house, something they could never have achieved in Ecuador.

The testimony of Fausto, a 32-year solderer who grew up in La Comuna, a lower-class neighborhood in the outskirts of Quito, epitomizes what most Ecuadorian migrants I interviewed in Madrid think of Ecuador. I met him on the street across the Museo El Prado while he was waiting for a friend. In spite of being a certified solderer by the SECAP, a technological instructional center in Quito, at home he was only able to work as an assistant for which he was paid the minimum wage (about two hundred dollars a month). Earning little to support his wife and two children, he decided to immigrate to Spain in 2000. The first year he worked in Valencia collecting onions for a low salary, 700 euros a month. The next year he moved to Madrid and found a job as an assistant solderer. After a few months, the company raised him to the position of solderer with a better salary. He was earning approximately two thousand euros a month when I interviewed him. Fausto mentioned that in Spain the employers value the expertise of their employees and recognize it in economic terms, something that Ecuadorian employers do not.

The reputation of Ecuadorian migrants as disciplined workers surprised some of the upper-middle-class Ecuadorians I interviewed in Quito, especially because the working classes are seen as lazy people by nature. Upper-middle-class Ecuadorians did not understand why lower-class migrants were more responsible at their workplace in Spain than in Quito. Fausto argued that in his case, he was willing to give the best of himself and work even harder than required because his work was valued and well paid. He said:

> Ecuadorians are not lazy. What happens is that [in Ecuador] there is exploitation. Here [in Spain] there is also exploitation but in a different way. Here you can have better living condition, there are more opportunities to prosper, be comfortable, and to educate yourself and your children. In Ecuador, even if you work hard it is impossible to be comfortable and educate your children… because, besides exploitation, there is misery. Here there is exploitation, but there is no misery. That is the great difference between Ecuador and Spain. The Ecuadorian sees that with what he is paid here, he can live well and even save money. He accepts the conditions and he is encouraged to work even better because he knows he is going to be paid, and one day he is going to return and open his own business….[78]

[78] *El ecuatoriano en sí no es ocioso. Lo que pasa es que allá hay explotación. Aquí también hay explotación, pero es diferente. Se vive en mejores condiciones de vida aquí, hay más oportunidades de surgir, de tener comodidades, de prepararse y preparar a los hijos. En cambio en Ecuador, por más que se trabaje es imposible tener comodidades, preparar a los hijos… porque prácticamente a más de haber explotación hay miseria, en cambio aquí hay explotación pero no hay miseria. Esa es la diferencia bien grande entre Ecuador y España. Es por eso, que tal vez el ecuatoriano ve que aquí con lo que le pagan, por más que le explotan le alcanza para vivir y le alcanza hasta para reunir, acepta las condiciones y hasta a uno le da como ánimos de seguir trabajando por lo que sabe que va a ganar, va a poder reunir y un día va a poder regresar y puede poner un negocio.*

Likewise, women who worked in the domestic and health care service felt more respected and valued in Spain, not only because of their better salaries, but also because of the better working conditions and the attitudes of people for whom they worked. Women who took care of elder people, for example, not only cooked their meals, but also sat in the dining table and ate dinner with them. During the nap time after lunch, they were free to leave the apartment at their convenience. In Ecuador, this type of interaction would never happen due to the established social order, which defines social bondaries between employers and employees.

Like many migrants I interviewed, Fausto wanted to return to Ecuador once he had built his house and saved enough money to start his own business. However, he did not trust the government and did not have hopes for a better future. He was aware that the working conditions in Ecuador were different, and because of it, Ecuadorian people had a different attitude toward their work. He said:

> I think that the Ecuadorian is afraid of taking risks, of knowing that he can do it…. To give you an example, to lose one thousand dollars [in Ecuador] is the amount of money you make in one year. Here [in Spain] you can make one thousand dollars in fifteen or twenty days. If you lose this money, you can recuperate it the next month. In Ecuador you need several years to recuperate this money.[79]

[79] *Yo creo que el ecuatoriano tiene miedo de arriesgarse a saber que él puede …. Por decirle actualmente, perder $1.000 es el trabajo casi reunido de un ano. En cambio aquí $1.000 se lo*

Fausto admitted being nostalgic for Ecuador and for Ecuadorian music, which he learned to appreciate only when he left the country. With the exception of a few *música rocolera* songs performed by Julio Jaramillo and Segundo Rosero, Fausto admitted that he did not like Ecuadorian music. He disliked *música nacional*, but started listening to traditional *pasillos* out of nostalgia for Ecuador. He and his friends were happy when they knew there was an Ecuadorian singer touring in Spain. Fausto's perception of Ecuadorian music had changed in Spain, as much as his impressions of Ecuador and the Ecuadorian people.

While Fausto's story was a successful one, there were sad stories of people who were still looking for a job and were having hard time paying the debts they have acquired to travel to Spain. They lived in precarious conditions. Most shared a room with many other Ecuadorian migrants they did not know, sleeping on mattresses placed in a row on the floor. Those who could not adapt to the new environment advised people who wanted to immigrate to think well before starting the process because it was hard to adapt to the new life.

When I inquired Ecuadorian migrants about their reasons for leaving Ecuador, they frequently complained about the Ecuadorian government and the high levels of corruption and impunity in the legal system. They were vocal about

consigue en quince días, veinte días si lo pierde al otro mes ya lo recupera, pero en Ecuador recueprar $1.000 pasarían años y no puede recueperarlos. Ese es el miedo a arriesgarse y a perder.

their immense love for Ecuador, but also critical about its legal system and social hierarchies. Their comments appear in letters and messages Ecuadorian migrants send to their families through the migrants' section published in Ecuadorian newspapers. They claim there is no better place to live in than in Ecuador, but also admit there is no future for progress given the corruption levels at all social levels.

CONCLUSION

As seen in this chapter, upper-middle-class Ecuadorians aspire to create an international presence with their music, cuisine, and other cultural expressions. Ironically, Ecuadorian migrants are more visible and audible abroad with their musical practices and typical dishes than upper-middle class Ecuadorians who do not maintain a high profile themselves. When abroad, they generally try to assimilate in foreign cultures rather than maintaining ties rooted in their own culture. The elites' lack of support for their country also manifests itself in their response to the national economic crisis. Their first reaction is to withdraw their money from national banks and deposit them in foreign ones, thus leaving the country without economic support to respond to the crisis. In contrast, the lower classes support the dollarization of the economy with remittances they send to their families, which, as mentioned earlier, have become the second largest source of gross national income after petroleum exports (Acosta 2005).

Ecuadorian migrants reproduce abroad what Foster (2002: 18-19) calls "a national frame of reference," in which the nation is materialized through "ways of doing things" such as gathering in parks to play Ecua-soccer. These practices become "sites where the nation as imaginative construct or narrative is made and made real" (Foster 2002: 6). On the other hand, the nation is "reminded" in daily banal activities such as listening to EPM and eating typical dishes. According to Billig, the routine and familiar forms of "banal nationalism" in everyday life are usually overlooked because dominant notions of nationalism are associated with passionate demonstrations of patriotism and ideological expressions of the dominant classes (idem). As this author argues, "this reminding is so familiar, so continual, that it is not consciously registered as reminding" (Billig 1995: 8). The materialization and reminding of nationality is particularly significant for the first generation of Ecuadorian migrants, who generally resist assimilation to the host culture and dream of going back "home" as soon as they get enough funds to secure a living in Ecuador.

The boom of EPM in the late 1990s reflects the weakening of the socio-cultural hegemony of the dominant classes. In my view, the lower classes are destabilizing, de-homogenizing, racializing, and pluralizing perceptions of nationhood through the production and consumption of EPM, both within and outside Ecuador. Likewise, they are highlighting the indigenous component of the

mestizo nation, evident not only in the music, but also in the performance and performing contexts of EPM concerts, as well as in the ethnicity and social class of the public.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE *PASILLO* DEBATE: WHOSE NATIONAL IDENTITY?

In this final chapter, I summarize and tie together the discourses of different-social-class Ecuadorians regarding *música nacional/Música Nacional*. To these ends, I analyze the *pasillo* debate of the 1980s and 1990s regarding its standing as Ecuador's musical symbol. Athough this debate has lost overtone with the economic crisis of the late 1990s, it nevertheless provides insights into elite and working-class perceptions of *música nacional/Música Nacional* as well as changes in the "frames of reference" defining national identity. In the second section I discussed the agency of lower-class Ecuadorians in shaping a "popular nationalism" vis-à-vis the elites.

The term *música nacional*/*Música Nacional* is a metaphor for Ecuadorian national identity. It constitutes a sort of barometer reflecting Ecuadorians' perceptions of nationhood. The way this term is used, showing the inclusion or exclusion of genres associated with the urban lower classes and indigenous populations, provides information about how different social groups envision the nation's ethnic configuration. For upper-middle-class Ecuadorians, the notion of *música nacional* excludes genres associated with the indigenous and Afro-

Ecuadorian population. They identify with Ecuadorian music of yesteryear, especially the traditional *pasillos* whose lyrics and music point to Hispanic cultural heritage (see Chapter 3). They scorn *música rocolera* and *música chicha* because of their perceived vulgar lyrics and lack of artistic quality, and because of the social contexts in which they are played, associated with drunkenness and violence. They regard these genres as decadent versions of Ecuadorian folk song and/or as commercial phenomena of little substance (see Chapter 4). For them, "true" Ecuadorian music comprises the songs of the *música nacional* anthology, embodying a nationalist ideology of *mestizaje.*

By contrast, for lower-class Ecuadorians the term *Música Nacional* includes *música rocolera, música chicha,* and *tecnocumbia.* They identify with these styles because they have shaped since childhood their sonic imagination of "Ecuadorianness" and are part of everyday life experiences. Most importantly, it is *artistas nacionales*, people who express the sentiments of "the people" and share with them a common social profile, who perform these songs. Lower-class Ecuadorians do not reject the elites' *música nacional;* however, they regard it as *música nacional antigua* (old *música nacional*). Thus, while the lower classes develop a sense of national belonging through the inclusion of many types of Ecuadorian music, the upper-middle classes exclude the lower classes from their national imaginary by stigmatizing *música chicha* and *música rocolera.*

How does the recent usage of the term *Música Nacional* by lower-class Ecuadorians challenge the notion of national music as a homogenous projection of Ecuadorianness? How does *Música Nacional* take issue with concepts of authenticity and place of origin as defining elements of national expression by focusing instead on the importance of local performance contexts and on the origin of the performers, regardless of their repertoire's origins? How does the lower-class conception of *Música Nacional* also account for heterogeneity within the lower classes, broadening a sense of "Ecuadorianness" relative to education, age, occupation, ethnicity, and gender?

Despite their different functions and stylistic features, *música rocolera, música chicha,* and *tecnocumbia* have become expressions related to one another and to the lower classes through a semiotic process connecting them with people's ideas, feelings, and experiences of "Ecuadorianess." The connection stems from frequent presentations of these musics in lower-class performance contexts, such as the Coliseo Julio César Hidalgo. In addition, *tecnocumbia* stars began their careers singing *música rocolera* and *música chicha* songs, leading the public to identify these performers with all three styles. In other words, through an association of sounds with particular places and particular performers, these musics have become what Turino refers to as "indices of similarity and identity

between individuals" who "share a commonality of background" (Turino 2004: 11).

To examine the ideas that the urban lower classes have of national music, I visited the Historical Center of Quito where street vendors used to sell pirated CDs,. I approached the vendors with the pretext that I was looking for CDs of "national music" for friends who recently immigrated to Spain and asked for suggestions as to what kind of music I could send them. Most vendors showed me CDs of *música chicha,* with modern *sanjuanito* and *pasacalle* remixes. Others asked if I wanted the *música nacional antigua* or the *música nacional bailable,* distinguishing the traditional *pasillos* from *música chicha,* and underscoring the difference I observed in the usage of the terms *música nacional*/*Música Nacional.* In general, most vendors did not have CDs of *pasillos* in their stacks because, according to them, "that music did not sell well."

At EPM concerts, the responses to my questions about national music were quite similar. I asked people in attendance what kind of music we were listening to when a *tecnocumbia* or *música chicha* singer was on the stage. In both cases, most people answered that it was *Música Nacional,* focusing attention to the fact that "our *artistas nacionales*" were singing the songs. When I asked if *música chicha* was Ecuadorian music, they generally answered: "Yes, it is *Música Nacional.*" Likewise, many people considered *música rocolera* to be *Música*

Nacional for the same reasons. For the popular classes, the notion of "the national" is constructed not so much in relation to the origin or "authenticity" of the music as it is to the origin of the singers (Santillán 2004: 49). With their numerous performances outside the country, *artistas nacionales* are perceived as connecting a diasporic Ecuadorian community with the homeland. Their performances help migrants recreate a temporal space reminding them of their origins. In addition, lower-class Ecuadorians feel it is a patriotic duty to support *artistas nacionales* because they regard them as ambassadors representing Ecuador internationally.

Conversely, when I asked upper-middle-class Ecuadorians if *música chicha* was Ecuadorian music, many rejected the idea, pointing out that *música chicha* was the music of "Indians," *cholos,* and the populace. Other interviewees identified the working-class *pasillos* from the 1970s as *música rocolera,* i.e., as music inciting people to drink, but not as *pasillos* in the traditional sense (Wong 1999). In both cases, they avoided the term "Ecuadorian music" because neither *música rocolera* nor *música chicha* represented national sentiment for them.

THE *PASILLO* DEBATE

In the 1980s and 1990s, upper-middle-class Ecuadorians engaged in heated discussions about the artistic value and standing of the *pasillo* as a musical symbol. In this debate, elites overlooked the musical changes the *pasillo* had

undergone throughout the past century, from the early twentieth-century *pasillo* to the traditional *pasillo* to the *pasillo rocolero.* Thus, advocates and critics are not always referring to the same *pasillo* as they debate each other, but rather to different styles emerging in different historical periods and representing the ideology of different social classes. An examination of local newspapers from the 1980s shows a constant preoccupation with the future of the traditional *pasillo.* Headlines such as "Don't die *pasillo,*"[80] "What to do with the *pasillo?*"[81] "The *pasillo* is still alive on the lips of the Ecuadorian people,"[82] reflected this attitude. In the 1990s, intellectuals questioned the value of *pasillos rocoleros* with headlines such as: "The *pasillo* has stagnated," "The *pasillo* has been abused,"[83] and "There is a regression in the aesthetic quality of the *pasillo.*"[84]

This debate becomes a "field of opinion" that allows Ecuadorians to voice in subtle and disguised ways their views about race, morality, and social hierarchies; such views that are not normally expressed overtly. In other words, preference or rejection of the traditional *pasillo,* or of the *pasillo rocolero,* expresses acceptance of or resistance toward dominant values. Negative views of

[80] *El Comercio*, B-9. August 16, 1992. Quito.
[81] *Revista del Sindicato de Trabajadores de Saneamiento Ambiental* (SYTSA), 5:5, pp. 37-39. Quito.
[82] *Semana*, 2. May 29, 1988. Guayaquil.
[83] *El Comercio*, B-3. July 3, 1994. Quito.
[84] *El Comercio*. n/a.

working-class music also disguise a critique of globalization, commercialization, and the adoption of foreign cultural elements.

The debates emerge at the end of the twentieth century as Ecuadorians youths, adults, and elders bring their generational aesthetics to struggles over musical representation. For Ecuadorians now in their elder years, *música nacional* is the "authentic" Ecuadorian music. This is the *música nacional* anthology disseminated by the radio and by international recording industries in the first half of the twentieth century, which "integrated" Ecuador into an international musical arena. By contrast, for Ecuadorians born in the 1960s and1970s, *música nacional* is Ecuadorian popular music of any kind, including *música rocolera.* For this generation, *música nacional* reaffirms the notion of "local" versus "foreign." In the 1960s and 1970s, *música nacional* competed with the Colombian *cumbia,* Mexican rock, Spanish *baladas,* and American pop, disco and soul, which greatly changed the consumption patterns of Ecuadorian youth. On the other hand, for Ecuadorians born in the 1980s and1990s, *música nacional* embodies a sense of marginalization and de-territorialization as a result of the international migration.

As I have mentioned, however, the different discourses in this debate are not invariably associated with particular social classes or generational groups. Religious beliefs, levels of education, and moral values have a strong influence in defining the discourses with which people identify. Thus, while many working-

class women and Christians do not identify with the *pasillos rocoleros,* there are upper-middle-class Ecuadorians who do identify with them and attend *música rocolera* festivals. These examples remind us that social-class identities tend to over-homogenize people and neglect their "private selves."

For analytical purposes, I am forced to generalize, and I classify three discourses in the debates mentioned above: elite, popular, and academic. Each discourse represents the voice of the upper-middle classes, lower classes, and intellectuals, imagining the nation from a unique social and cultural standpoint. Elite discourse tends to champion the traditional *pasillos* from the 1920s–1950s, as we have seen, based on constructed metaphors of Hispanic tradition (Chapter 3). Popular discourse recognizes the significance of *pasillos rocoleros* from the 1970s because it is music "of the people, by the people, and for the people" (Chapter 4). Finally, academic discourse presents the views of conservatory-trained composers, intellectuals, and government officials who advocate the need to "modernize" and "rescue" the traditional *pasillo.*

This academic discourse seeks innovation of the mid-century form through the incorporation of jazz and rock harmonies, as well as in new arrangements for symphony orchestra or for non-conventional instruments such as the Afro-Ecuadorian *marimba.* In 1993, Hugo Celi, Vice President of Ecuador's Society of Authors and Composers (SAYCE) stated, "the *pasillo* needs to be

dressed up in a tuxedo," suggesting the need for symphonic renditions. For Jaime Guevara, a leftist songwriter, "it is important to break with the cliché that the *pasillo* is played [only] on guitars and *requinto.*" [85] In his view, the incorporation of jazz or rock harmonies would make this genre more attractive to younger audiences familiar with North American music.

Influenced by Western views, academic composers believe that the stagnation or decline of a genre is the result of lack of musical innovation, and that experimentation and progress are intrinsic elements of modern music composition. For them, the *pasillo rocolero* epitomizes the decline of the traditional *pasillo,* both in terms of lyrical content and musical form. Composer Marcelo Beltrán describes its features as follows:

> "... there are no tonal variants, the harmonic accompaniment is restricted to four or five chords, the melody has a narrow range and stays in the highest register that an untrained voice can reach which produces a constant weeping and out-of-tune lament, all of this supported by a text of questionable literary value and which has the same aesthetic level as the music: very little inventiveness, defeatist content, and continuous calls for the excessive consumption of alcohol and the practice of conjugal infidelity, which is portrayed as normal[86] (Beltrán 1996: 7-8).

[85] "Lo importante es romper con el cliché de que el pasillo es requinto y guitarra." *El Comercio*. September 15, 1995.

[86] "No existe ninguna variante tonal. Se restringe a cuatro o cinco acordes de acompañamiento, melodía ubicada en un estrecho ámbito que permanence en los registros más agudos a los que puede alcanzar una voz no educada, lo que produce un constante efecto de lamento chillón y destemplado, apoyado todo esto por un texto de dudoso valor literario y que goza del mismo nivel estético que la música: escasa invención, contenido derrotista, y permanents exhortaciones al consumo excesivo de alcohol y la práctica de la infidelidad conyugal, mostrándola como algo normal" (Beltrán 1996, 7-8).

Among other attempts to revitalize the *pasillo,* the Ministry of Education and Culture organized, in September of 1995, the "First International Conference of the Pasillo in the Americas," following a 1993 National Meeting organized by the Municipality of Quito to discuss the significance of the genre. Ecuadorian composers, musicologists, writers, and international scholars from Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela exchanged ideas about the role of the *pasillo* in articulating cultural identity as well as its current status vis-à-vis transnational musics. The event received full coverage in the mass media. That same year, the Ministry of Education and Culture designated October 1, Julio Jaramillo's birthday, as "National Pasillo Day," paying homage to the Ecuadorian singer who internationalized the *pasillo.*

For advocates of the traditional *pasillo*, *música rocolera* is "*corta-venas*" because of its sentimental and depressive character. They believe that the *pasillo* has lost popularity because the lyrics of modern *pasillos*, based on poems written in the 1970s, are not suitable for music setting (Godoy 1995). Furthermore, they believe that the bombardment of international musics by transnational recording industries, a lack of national conscience on the part of the local mass media, and a lack of policies promoting national artists, have left the *pasillo* without protection. However, as I have mentioned before, the differences between the traditional

pasillos and the *pasillos rocoleros* reside more in extra-musical factors such as the performance contexts and the social status of performers and audiences than in the music itself.

POPULAR NATIONALISM

Studies on nationalism and national identities are generally examined from the standpoint of the dominant classes, often ignoring the experiences of the popular classes which are also part of the nation. Borrowing Benedict Anderson's view of the nation as an "imagined community," Florencia Mallon questions why the imagining occurs first and foremost in Europe, and why nationalist ideology is associated preferentially with the bourgeoisie (Mallon 1995: 7). If we regard nationalism as a *collective* attitude reflecting and molding people's sentiments of belonging, then the popular classes, as a faction of the nation, can also express "nationalism from below."

Accordingly, the nation can be imagined in more than one way, depending on who does the imagining. The notion of *música nacional/Música Nacional* implies a multiplicity of identities representing different ethnic, social, and generational groups all coexisting, competing, and vying for representation. Conceiving of a single "hegemonic national identity" seems unproductive in a pluri-ethnic and multicultural country split by regionalism such as Ecuador. This analysis explores instead various forms of "popular national identity," which I

consider alternative, spontaneous, and daily expressions of Ecuadorianness that has given national and even international visibility to the Ecuadorian popular classes.

As Raymond Williams argues, hegemony is never a complete process, "it has to continually be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified," because "it is also continually resisted, limited, altered, challenged by pressures not at all its own" (Williams 1977: 112). In EPM case study, the split of the upper-middle classes in their musical preferences and their low esteem for Ecuadorian popular culture greatly influenced the commercial visibility of the *pasillo*. Technological advancement as well as the economic crisis and the international migration in the late 1990s created "room to maneuver" (Chambers 1991) for national expression from below.

Nationalist expressions are often thought of as the result of organized forces seeking, or resisting, hegemonic power. In this study I have avoided the use of terms such as "counter-hegemony" and "resistance" in analyzing the complex processes of meaning making with regard to EPM because both terms, following Chambers' views, involve overt challenges to the legitimacy of a given power bloc. Borrowing instead Chambers' notion of "oppositional behavior," I view the ubiquity of EPM as a "disturbance" that does not directly challenge power relations but "has a particular potential to change states of affairs, by changing

people's 'mentalities' (their ideas, attitudes, values, and feelings)…" (Chambers 1991: 1). It is in this "room to maneuver" that the popular classes re-articulate their perceptions of the nation vis-à-vis themselves and "Others."

It would be naïve on my part to state that the popular classes are acting with a political agenda in mind, even though their actions and listening preferences have the potential of re-articulating nationalist expressions. EPM businessmen and *artistas nacionales* in search of economic profit and stardom find alternative mechanisms to produce and disseminate EPM in ways that are appealing to their audiences. They sell their CDs during their performances, and include their contact phone numbers for future contracts on posters, CD covers, and in video clips. In this way they bypass traditional media structures, controlled largely by the professional classes. Nevertheless, their strategies do not necessarily involve a counter-hegemonic nationalist agenda. Likewise, EPM consumers are looking for entertainment and a musical expression that speaks to their migratory experience, rather than to a form of resistance or vindication of a popular national identity. Nevertheless, the boom of EPM has had an unexpected result, namely a growing perception on the part of lower-class Ecuadorians that EPM is a national music encompassing all citizens, including themselves, more effectively than the old *música nacional.*

The boom of EPM forms in Quito, Madrid, and New York at the turn of the twenty-first century reflects the weakening of the dominant classes' socio-cultural hegemony. In his study of Peruvian *música chicha*, Turino argues, "since musical styles index group identity and derive their status and acceptance from that of the social group with which they are associated, changes in power relations are frequently indicated by changes in levels of diffusion and acceptance accorded different cultural forms" (Turino 1990). While the elites reject EPM, its level of diffusion and visibility has markedly changed. The popular classes are destabilizing, de-homogenizing, and pluralizing perceptions of nationhood through the production, dissemination and consumption of EPM. Moreover, in an even more emphatic move away from dominant conceptions of national inclusiveness (read exclusiveness), the popular classes are also accentuating the indigenous component of the "*nación mestiza*," which is disclosed not only in musical aspects, but also in the performing contexts of EPM concerts, and in the ethnic and social class identity of the audience.

The weakening of the elites' hegemony is occurring in other areas such as politics, where indigenous and populist political parties have come to the forefront while dominant parties like Partido Social Cristiano and Democracia Popular have exhausted their leadership. Ex-president Oswaldo Hurtado, the Democracia Popular candidate in the 2002 presidential elections, occupied the penultimate

position in a race of 13 candidates. The popular classes do not believe in their political promises any more and vote for candidates who are little known in the political arena, with hopes of finding a president who cares about *el pueblo* (the people).

Essentially, my dissertation underscores an emphasis on *practice* and *discourses* rather than *ideology* in exploring processes of national identity construction from below, without implying that national identity should be analyzed only from one standpoint or the other. Upper-middle-class Ecuadorians seem to aspire to a cohesive, "cleaned up" image of national identity following the ideology of *mestizaje*. Stemming from this premise, they often claim that Ecuador lacks a musical identity and international presence. They also contend that Ecuadorians have an inferiority complex and low esteem for local cultural expressions. In other words, elite nationalism is discursive, ideological, passionate, prescriptive, and "flagged," whereas popular nationalism is performative, practiced, spontaneous, descriptive, and "unflagged."

From a theoretical stance that privileges quotidian expression and lived experience over ideological formulations, this article shows how the popular classes rearticulate and reproduce their sense of "Ecuadorianness" through spontaneous musical practices and consumption patterns. The question that remains to be answered is whether upper-middle class Ecuadorians will become

receptive to a new construct of national identity that more effectively accommodates the heterogeneous Ecuadorian population, given that their earlier nationalist paradigm no longer speaks to the reality of Ecuadorian experience.

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Newspapers:

El Comercio.
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